PREMIERE ISSUE

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FUTURE OF PLAYSTATION

REVIEWED
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MANHUNT 2

TOP 10 WARHAWK TACTICS

PLAYSTATION EYE SECRET FEATURES THAT WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU PLAY

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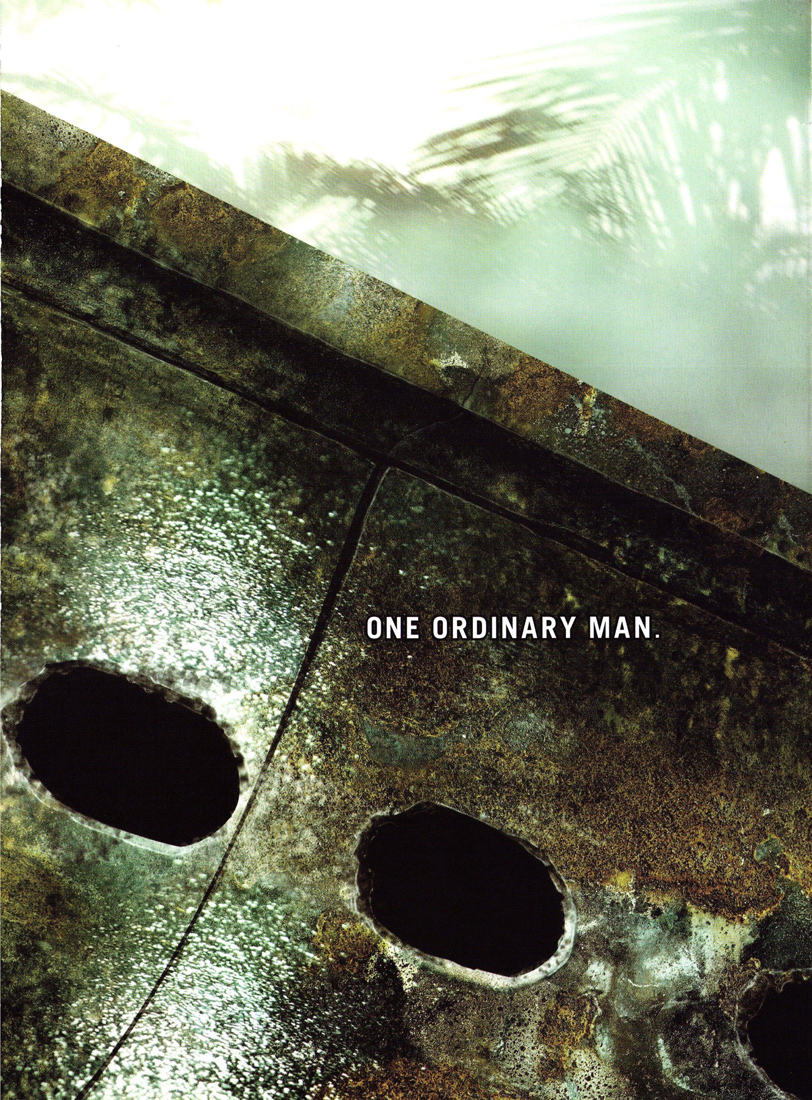
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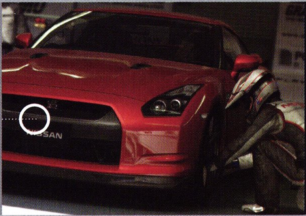

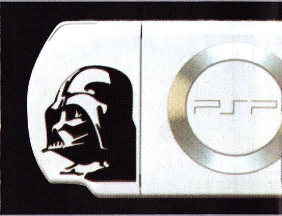

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PlayStation
The Official Magazine

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Whether it's PS3, PSN, PSP, or PS2; whether it's games, Blu-ray movies, or downloadable content; whether it's news, reviews, previews, or community events, rest assured. We've got the entire spectrum of the PlayStation world covered.

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The official stamp is a promise. It underlines our commitment to delivering the news that matters from the source that counts. It's the inside track to the people and games that will shape the future of PlayStation.

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From cover to glossy cover, we'll deliver the information you need to satisfy your enthusiasm for everything PlayStation. We'll only bring you the important stories, and guarantee every editorial page imparts information that you'll use and enjoy. Practical, independent buying advice will shape your purchases, and practical, informative features will enhance your PlayStation experience. All presented with the visually appealing style only a magazine can deliver.

Editor's Note

"I'm being toyed with by a bunch of depraved children."

So here it is: the first issue of *PlayStation: The Official Magazine.* Former *PSM* readers will notice quite a few changes, but should also still recognize our trademark commitment to bringing you the best coverage of everything PlayStation. We've restructured the sections to ensure that every important facet of PlayStation is covered. Starting with System Update, we've got interviews (SCE President Kaz Hirai), news features (PlayStation Eye), and more. Of course we have previews, features (you won't believe how amazing *Gran Turismo 5* looks), and reviews that give you the best buying advice. We wrap up the sections with PlayStation Network. Here you'll find out what's happening online with PlayStation 3, including reviews of the PlayStation Network games, strategy for dominating *Warhawk* online, and your letters.

> "It should be clear what being official means. In a big way that means access."

We'll be adding pieces along the way, and listening to your feedback to ensure we're giving you the magazine that you want. So be sure to tell me what you think (as if you need that invite!)

It should be clear what being official means. In a big way that means access. So we got time with *Gran Turismo* creator Kazunori Yamauchi to reveal new details on what we should expect in *GT5*. We sat with Kaz Hirai to get word right from the top on what PlayStation fans should expect in the months ahead. We tapped *Warhawk* developers Incognito directly for the best 10 tips to help you (well, me) dominate online. And that's just for starters.

We're just getting going.

Rob

"Quote" contest

Of course the quote contest remains. That headline at the top of this column is a quote from a movie. **Identify the movie, send your answer (along with your name and shipping address) to editor@psmonline.com** with Ed Note Holiday in the subject line. One lucky winner will be selected to receive a Blu-ray movie from the pile on my desk. That's what Joel Carey of Fitchberg, WI will get for recognizing December's quote from *Casablanca*. Good luck.

PlayStation
The Official Magazine

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ART
ART DIRECTOR **Ken Bousquet**
CREATIVE DIRECTOR **Dan Fitzpatrick**
CONTRIBUTING ART DIRECTOR **Mark Rosenthal**

BUSINESS
PUBLISHER **Daniel Morris**
dmorris@futureus.com
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **David Cooper**
646-723-5447, dcooper@futureus.com
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR - GAMES GROUP **Nate Hunt**
562-983-8004, nhunt@futureus.com
REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR (Bay Area) **Christina Perez**
650-238-2504, cperez@futureus.com
REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR (South West) **Isaac Uguy**
949-218-0981, Iuguy@futureus.com
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE **Benjamin Alessio**
650-238-2324, balessio@futureus.com
DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SALES & MARKETING **Jim Schiekofer**
646-723-5410, jschiekofer@futureus.com
CORP. SALES MIDWEST MANAGER **Jodi Sosna**
212-217-1358, jsosna@futureus.com
CORP. SALES WEST MANAGER **Nadine Weiss**
323-493-5929, nweiss@futureus.com
AD PROJECT MANAGER **Rhoda Ushijima**
650-238-2474, rushijima@futureus.com
ADVERTISING COORDINATOR **Arthur St. Germaine**
650-238-2571, astgermaine@futureus.com
MARKETING MANAGER **Andrea Recio-Ang**
650-238-2548, arecio-ang@futureus.com
DIRECT MARKETING SPECIALIST **Alexandra Davydova**

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PRODUCTION DIRECTOR **Richie Lesovoy**
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Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR).

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www.futureplc.com
Tel +44 1225 442244
www.futureplc.com

NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN: Roger Parry
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REPRINTS: For reprints, contact Reprint Management Services, 717.399.1900 ext. 100

ISSN: 1940-0721
PlayStation: The Official Magazine is published 13 times a year (monthly, except semi-monthly in July) by Future US, Inc., 4000 Shoreline Court, Ste 400, South San Francisco, CA 94080, USA. Periodicals postage paid in South San Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices. Ride-along enclosure in B-1. Newsstand distribution is handled by Curtis Circulation Co. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement #40043631. Returns: Bleuchip International,P.O. Box 25542,London, ON N6C 6B2 Basic subscription rates: one year (13 issues) $20 U.S., Canada $34 U.S. (Canadian price includes GST (GST #128220688), foreign $44 U.S. Prepaid in U.S. funds only. POSTMASTER send changes of address to PlayStation: The Official Magazine, P.O. Box 5154, Harlan, IA 51593-0654.

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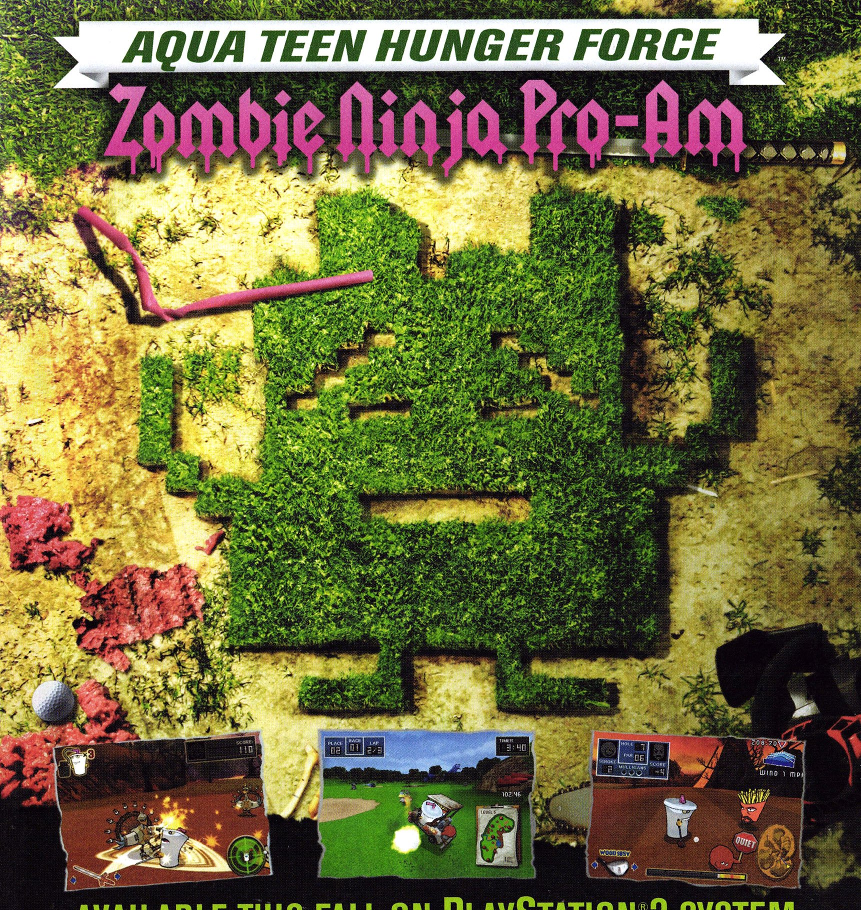
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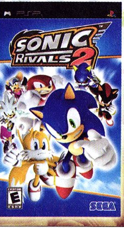

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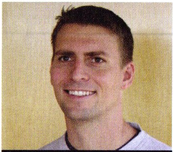
“PS Eye is intended to compliment the gamepad, not replace it.” –Dr. Richard Marks

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

How the PlayStation Eye will transform the PS3 experience



Dr. Richard Marks

Dr. Richard Marks is Senior Researcher at Sony Computer Entertainment America’s R&D division. He’s an M.I.T. graduate with a degree in avionics, and a PhD from Stanford University where he researched underwater robotics. He joined SCEA in 1999, four years before the release of his creation, the EyeToy.

Say “hello” to the camera. Actually, in the near future that Sony envisions, you can say “hello” from the comfort of your couch, and your PlayStation 3 will answer back, asking how you are and what you’d like to play. The key to this — and much more — is the freshly released PlayStation Eye, creation of Dr. Richard Marks, the R&D mastermind behind PS2’s successful EyeToy camera. But in Marks’s own words, PS Eye is much more than its predecessor. But whatever you do, don’t call it a webcam.

Eye on Interaction

“The goals with PS Eye were to create a new device for PS3 that enabled both interactions and communication,” explains Marks, talking about the device’s origins. “We wanted to continue the momentum we had created with EyeToy, and also take advantage of the PlayStation Network capabilities. So, PS Eye was really designed as both a game camera and an AV chat camera.”

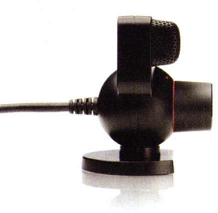
The PS Eye was originally unveiled alongside *The Eye of Judgment* (reviewed this issue on page 74), which was used to demonstrate the camera’s ability to “scan” physical cards, and bring them to life on the game board. The game turned out to be much more than a shallow tech demo, and is only the tip of the iceberg of PS Eye’s potential in-game uses.

First and foremost is voice chat, a staple of online gaming. PS Eye has the ability to unencumber players from wired or wireless headsets. “PS Eye has four microphones in an array formation, allowing for high-quality voice input. The idea of the mic array is that it allows voice chat without making you wear anything, so more people might choose to make use of it,” hopes Marks, explaining: “With a normal far-field mic, you get all the noise of the person’s environment, and the player’s voice is difficult to understand; the mic array enables us to reduce the background noise.”

Titles utilizing PS Eye for in-game chat are in development, according to Sony, but have yet to be formally announced by their publishers. In the meantime, we were able to use our PS Eye to video chat with other PS3 users via the system’s Xross Media Bar, all of who were impressed not just by the video quality compared to the EyeToy, but by just how clear we sounded. Various departments within Sony Computer Entertainment have also taken notice. “We use PS Eye on PS3 for our own video conferences with Tokyo,” Marks reveals.

Face of the Future

“Another application we are working on is speech recognition without a headset,” confirms

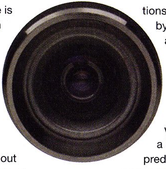


> "The goals with PS Eye were to create a new device for PS3 that enabled both interactions and communication." –Dr. Richard Marks

Marks, who also has a hand in the software side of human interface R&D. "The face-detection capability that is offered in the latest Sony still cameras can run in real time in software on PS3, so I've been helping with that as well."

Face recognition is an experimental aspect of the PlayStation 3 that dates back to the early days of the system's R&D process. It is rumored that PlayStation creator Ken Kutaragi was so impressed by Marks's EyeToy that he wanted to integrate a camera into the PS3 console itself for, among other things, face detection. The idea was that the system would be able to recognize the user sitting in front of it and load their profile without any input on their part. The software Marks is working on could very well bring this dream to fruition, but it has more tangible in-game applications. At a basic level, it means that games will accurately track your head position, so that leaning left or right could be used to peek around corners in a first-person shooter, for example.

Marks has previously demonstrated other ways of converting real-world actions into in-game manipulation. At DICE 2005, he showed how retro-reflective material, which can reflect 100% of light back to its source (in this case the LED on an EyeToy) could be used for much more involved "natural interaction" with consoles, and not just for games. An example is wearing gloves with retro-reflective fingertips and using them to navigate menus with air gestures, much like the futuristic computer interface in *Minority Report*. We asked Marks about progress on that front, to which he replied: "Since then, our internal game team in London has made a tech demo of a system which I think is even better. I think you'll first see a system like that deployed inside of a game environment." Using gestures to play a board game is one thing, but controlling a real-time strategy battle without clunky gamepad input would truly elevate the experience, and it's not out of the realm of possibility in the least.



One Man's Vision

"My hope is to improve the interactive experience and grow the audience," says Marks of his long-term intentions. "I think PS Eye will help do both, by making voice and video communications easy and enjoyable, by adding new interaction features to traditional games, and by enabling completely new interactive experiences." PS Eye will definitely play a larger role than its predecessor in how we experience PlayStation, but as Marks puts it: "PS Eye is intended to complement the gamepad, not replace it." We've compiled a list of closest-to-release titles to feature PS Eye support (see sidebar) and will be bringing you the latest on what Marks coyly refers to as "a few other small R&D projects" as soon as we can reveal them.

Randy Nelson

Keep Your Eye Out For...

Burnout Paradise

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Release: Early 2008

The PS Eye is used to snap photos of your online opponents right after you take them down. Start practicing your best (or worst) faces now, racers.

Trials of Topoq

Publisher: Sony
Release: TBA

Move your body to alter the towers of Topoq, changing the way a ball moves — and avoiding pitfalls — as it rolls towards the finish line. For download via PlayStation Network.

Operation: Creature Feature

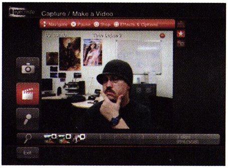
Publisher: Sony
Release: TBA

Lead tiny Blurbs through five hazardous levels using hand gestures in this PlayStation Network download.

Mesmerize, Aquatopia, and Tori-Emaki

Publisher: Sony
Release: TBA

"Interactive art" for download from the PlayStation Store and exclusively for PlayStation Eye. *Mesmerize* lets users interact with various digital scenes, *Tori-Emaki* uses gestures to fly a clock of birds through tranquil Japanese paintings, and *Aquatopia* is a virtual fish tank where movements affect fish behavior.



Get Crafty with EyeCreate

Sony's free *EyeCreate* software for PS Eye (available from the PlayStation Store) lets you record audio and video using the camera for editing and playback on your PS3. It features numerous video effects for manipulating the captured footage on your hard disk, but here's a sneaky side-use: a surveillance camera. *EyeCreate* can record stop-motion or time lapse footage, so you can effectively leave your TV off and see what's happening when you're out of the room. Using Remote Play, you can even stream the recorded video to your PSP from any Wi-Fi hotspot. For the *truly* paranoid.

PlayStation Digest

Top Stories, Industry Bits, and Oddities

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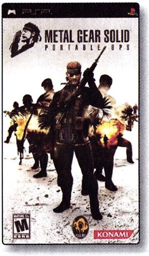
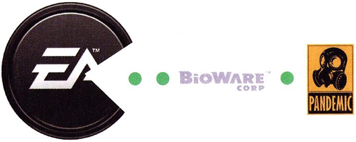


For the PSP, Slim is In

It's time for the people who've been harping on the PSP for its lack of good games to eat their words (and good riddance!). For the first time since February 2006, the PSP is the top-selling game system in Japan (for the month of September), thanks to its slimmer, trimmer body and the release of drool-worthy franchise games like *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII* and *Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops Plus*.

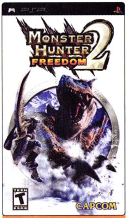
With a whopping 590,000 sales in Japan, the PSP broke its 500,000-unit monthly sales history for the first time ever… while the Nintendo DS only moved 391,752 units. The DS may have nailed "cute," but the PSP's got sexy down. If you've been faithful to the system since the beginning, pop open a bottle of champagne (or, er, a can of root beer or apple juice) to celebrate. Better yet, treat yourself to one of the PSP slim's system packages. For less than 200 bucks, you can get a silver PSP (yes, less fingerprint smudges!) bundled with the *Daxter* game, a *Family Guy* UMD, and 1GB memory stick.



EA Acquires BioWare and Pandemic

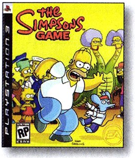
In mid-October, Electronic Arts bought BioWare Corporation and Pandemic Studios, the largest combined independent development studio, for a whooping $620 million. BioWare is known for its PC RPGs, such as *Neverwinter Nights* and *Knights of the Old Republic*, and its forthcoming Xbox 360 RPG, *Mass Effect*. Pandemic crafted gems like *Full Spectrum Warrior* and *Mercenaries*, and is working on the upcoming *Saboteur* (see preview on page 36). Regarding the acquisition, John Riccitiello, EA's CEO, says, "These are two of the most respected studios in the industry… They'll make a strong contribution to our strategic growth initiatives." How will this affect PlayStation fans? We're tracking down more details on whether this change means more Bioware and Pandemic games (cough, *Mass Effect* sequels, cough) will be coming to the PS3.

In similar news, Sony acquired Evolution Studios (makers of *MotorStorm*) for $32.6 million at the Tokyo Game Show. 'Tis the season for mergers, we suppose.



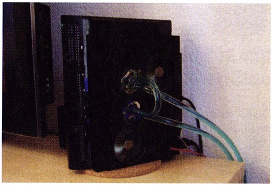
Bad News for Monster Hunters

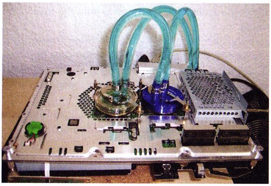
While *Monster Hunter* hasn't been quite the smash hit it's been among teens in Japan, a small, but ferociously loyal following adores the game here in the U.S. Unfortunately, *Monster Hunter 3*, which was initially slated to be released on the PS3, has jumped ship and will now be a Wii exclusive. Why the sudden change of heart? Capcom's managing corporate officer, Katsuhiko Ichii, blames the "high development cost of titles for PS3." They may have a point. PS3 titles — *Unreal Tournament 3*, *LittleBigPlanet*, *Home*, *Area 51: Blacksite* — keep getting delayed.



The Simpsons Game steps on toes

Some folks would consider it an honor to be mocked by a franchise like *The Simpsons*... but not Rockstar or a few other unnamed companies. At the Leipzig Games Convention this year, Rockstar complained about a poster in *The Simpsons Game* that featured "Grand Theft Scratchy" and demanded its removal. Luckily, other great game parodies, like "Sitar Hero," "Neverquest," and "Medal of Homer," remain intact in the game.



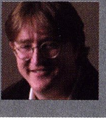


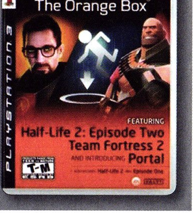
Cooling Off

We rarely hear about the PS3 experiencing overheating issues, but in case your entertainment room doubles as a sauna, Alexander Obermann, known as Dragonpower on the PlayStation forums, created a contraption you might find "cool." A series of tubes that snake through his warranty-forsaken PS3 carries liquid to the warmer parts of the machine, keeping temperatures at a balmy 90 degrees even at full power. He says the project took "about a week... worked 6-8 hours daily on it," and it gave him "a lot of headaches." He warns, "don't try this by yourself if you're not proficient in electronics / hardware modding. [It's] not for the faint-hearted!"

He's a Hater, Not a Lover

Gabe Newell, the co-founder of Valve (of acclaimed PC franchises like *Half-Life*, *Day of Defeat*, and *Team Fortress*), doesn't just hate the PS3. He detests it with every fiber of his being. He calls the system "a waste of everybody's time [with] no long-term benefits... You're not going to gain anything except a hatred of the architecture they've created." Yikes! But *Orange Box* on PS3 still has the same content as its PC or Xbox counterparts (*Half-Life 2, Episode 1, Episode 2, Team Fortress 2* and *Portal*) and will support 16-player multiplayer.





TOP10LIST

What we're playing, watching, reading, and absorbing in the world of entertainment this month.

The Office (U.S.) | TV Show | Free on nbc.com
Mix social stupidity with a heart of, well, bronze, and you've got Michael Scott, the world's most inept boss. We like to join the eccentric staff of Dunder-Mifflin every Thursday night to laugh at their office woes.

Rock Band | PS3 Game | $169.99
No one gets left out in *Rock Band*. Justin plays bass. Randy bangs on drums. Tom sings, too, while playing lead guitar. Bill shakes his head. Teresa hides. Ken takes photos. And Rob is in charge of costumes... and groupies.

Star Wars Limited Edition PSP | PSP Slim | $199.99
Randy babies his new PSP: "Every night, I disassemble it, clean each part with compressed air, and reassemble it. I put it back into the original packaging, so the next morning, it's like opening it all over again." Don't worry. We're seeking help.

Empowered Vol. 2 | Manga | $14.95
Adam Warren, the mastermind behind our Endpage comics for so long (now on page 13), also has a cheeky superhero parody. The heroine's skin-tight suit provides her with powers but also rips whenever she uses them. Note: It's not at all suitable for children.

The Perry Bible Fellowship: The Trial of Colonel Sweeto and Other Stories • Comic Book • $14.95
Wikipedia describes Nicholas Gurewitch's webcomic as "the juxtaposition of whimsical childlike imagery or fantasy with extremely morbid, absurdist humor." We describe it as absolutely hilarious.

The War | Television Documentary | $129.99
A World War II documentary produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, *The War* recounts the effect the war had on individuals from four "quintessentially American towns" as they travel around the world. Compulsive viewing.

MLB 07 The Show | PS3 Game | $39.99
On the PS3 version, to unlock all bonuses, pause during the game and enter this code: L1, L2, L3, L3, R1, Circle, Square. For all the Classic Stadiums in Exhibition mode: Down, Up, Right, Down, Up, Left, Up, Down.

28 Weeks Later | Blu-ray Movie | $39.98
As a marketing tactic, Fox International sprayed "ragevirus.com" around London. A quick thinker snatched up the URL before Fox could, however, so the company had to buy the URL from them for a lot more than it was worth.

Chuck | TV Show | Free on nbc.com
Chuck is your typical nerd. He plays games. He reads gaming magazines (including our sister mag PC Gamer that he read on a recent episode). He can't find a girlfriend. On his birthday, he accidentally downloads the world's spy secrets into his brain. Now, his life will never be the same.

Sandwiches | Food | $5-10
We've been eating a lot of sandwiches this month. Here are our picks: tomatoes, basil, mozzarella, and olive oil (Randy); turkey cranberry (Justin); BLT (Ken); turkey, avocado, and bacon (Tom); pastrami (Teresa); turkey (Rob); and chicken salad (Bill).

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION INTERVIEW

KAZ HIRAI THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT

The President of Sony Computer Entertainment talks about the return of DualShock 3 and the future of PlayStation Network.

Kaz Hirai 411

TITLE: President and Group Chief Operating Officer, Sony Computer Entertainment
EDUCATION: Bachelor of Liberal Arts, International Christian University, Tokyo
JOINED SONY: April 1984 with CBS/Sony in marketing of international music in Japan.
JOINED SCEA: August 1995
REPLACED KEN KUTARAGI: November 2006

What does it mean to be official, you ask? We were the only outlet to get a chance to talk directly to Kaz Hirai, the President of Sony Computer Entertainment, at the Tokyo Game Show. On the second floor of SCE's TK building — located right next door to a Maserati and Bentley car dealership housing some sweet, sweet rides — Hirai was comfortable and relaxed, the madness of TGS at the Makuhari Messe convention center seeming a long way from the quiet of the well-appointed meeting room. Since it was a struggle to elicit the nuggets of key information from the strained translation provided for Hirai's TGS keynote address, we got the word clear and to the point from the man who replaced Ken Kutaragi in the ultimate PlayStation hot seat.

Aside from unveiling new details of the PSP Remote Play functionality and the 1SEG TV tuner for PSP (that allows the PSP to receive TV signals, but it's a Japan-only function), and, of course, DualShock 3, Hirai's speech candidly referenced PlayStation 3 game production issues. Several developers have commented publicly about problems they experienced with the tools; Hirai acknowledged these issues and outlined clear solutions now put in place to address them.

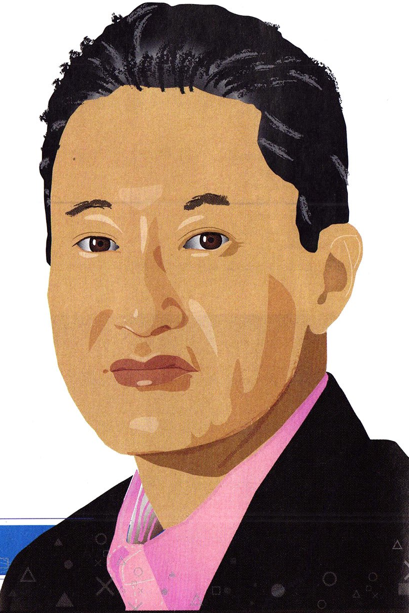
So how did these moves come about, what plans does Hirai have for the future, and does he have a message for the readers of PlayStation: The Official Magazine?

What happened internally to prompt and implement the initiatives now in place to assist the PlayStation development community?

KH: The issues had been raised, and I'd heard about them, but perhaps not in as much detail as recently. It came up during calls with developers and publishers, and anecdotally and among developer support at SCEA, and their counterparts here [in Japan]. Peripherally I knew about some of the developer issues, and over the past six months [while at SCE] I continued to hear the concerns. So I looked into what the issues were. What did we need to do internally? What processes were in place to identify issues? So we know what they are and what we need to do to address them.

Were you surprised by the initial reaction from the community to the demand for vibration effects in the controller?

KH: More the longevity of the requests — it was consistent. It was clearly not something people were willing to let go — not a fad request. So after I got back to Japan, I got the engineering guys, and said "look, I understand the technical issues... [involved in combining both rumble effects and the SIXAXIS motion in one controller] can we give it one more go and come up with a conclusion?" If anything, the requests from the fans were getting stronger. So we saw the prototypes and took it from there. Traditionally we announce technology like this, and then share with the development community. This time we shared the tech to get 'feedback' — no pun intended — and allow time for demos to be made to show the third-party partners. This was a better way than just showing [the DualShock controller] behind a glass window.



SONY
DUALSHOCK 3

Illustration by Ken Bousquet

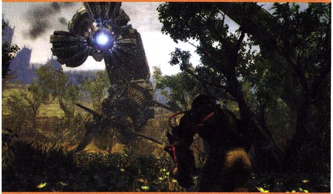
> “With the PS3 we’re pushing the future of interactive entertainment to be enjoyed in a high definition environment, and especially in a network environment.” –Kaz Hirai

So why will the DualShock 3 launch in Japan first?
KH: It’s not because Japan is the “home” country; it’s the smallest market by the number of people [compared to North America and Europe]. It’s that we want to make sure we can supply enough units to one market before spreading out to all three.

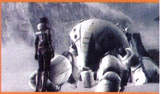
What is planned for the future of PlayStation Network? Will we see movies to download, music, etc?
KH: Any digital entertainment content — music, films, photos — it’s all bits and bytes, and of course we could do that. But it depends on the experience we want to give to the consumer. What’s the difference between our music download service and the others? Maybe one that navigates to *SingStar*, so it’s a unique PlayStation experience, not just providing content you can get elsewhere. Once we have the right formula, we’ll expand in to that area. *Gran Turismo TV*, for example, leads to potential car TV downloads, so they would fit in the *GT* family. And, of course, digital rights management will play a very big role in what we’re able to do. But predominantly at this time it’s games. Games, games, and more games.

So do you have a message for the readers of the new PlayStation: The Official Magazine?
KH: [After a thoughtful pause] Between PS2, PSP, and PS3 we want to be a platform provider that can be enjoyed by not just one segment of the market. We like to think we do that well with the pricing strategy for software. With the PS3, we’re pushing the future of interactive entertainment to be enjoyed in a high definition environment, and especially in a network environment. PS3 is the device that allows your consumers to enjoy content from anywhere in the world, and enjoy the world from your home. And you’ll help make sure that it’s exciting, compelling titles that we create. △○✕□

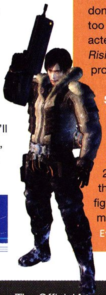
Capcom Announces New PS3 Games



BIONIC COMMANDO The man with the bionic arm is back, and this time he’s eating right. Capcom will be releasing its next-gen rendition of the arcade and NES classic *Bionic Commando* next year, now in full three-dimensional glory. We were given a demonstration of the game’s swinging mechanic at a recent press event in swinging London: the most relevant analog is clearly Activision’s recent *Spider-Man* games, but *Bionic Commando* is looking significantly more evolved than any Spidey so far. Rather than hurtling from random points in the sky, you’ll actually be latching your bionic arm to specific points in the game world: buildings, highway signs, and the like. You can tear down nearly anything (ripping out pieces of buildings was particularly cool), and then drop or throw it onto enemies to predictably destructive effect. The engine and development are being handled by Swedish outfit Grin, while Capcom Japan handles the design — a collaboration the company hopes will result in a truly international product.



LOST PLANET: EXTREME CONDITION has been quite a success on Xbox 360, selling over 1.6 million copies and proving to be one of the most popular multiplayer games on Xbox Live. Now it’s coming to PS3, with all the snow-leveling, mech-driving goodness that made the original so popular. As far as new features go, however, don’t get your expectations too high: a few bonus characters (including, quite gloriously, Frank West from *Dead Rising*, and the venerable Megaman) is all that Capcom is promising thus far. The game will hit in early 2008.

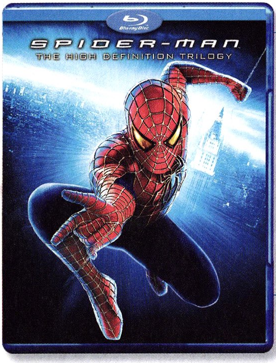


STREET FIGHTER 4 The biggest hitter of all? *Street Fighter 4* has been officially announced for PS3. All Capcom had to show us was a highly stylized trailer, which showed Ken and Ryu going at it (but didn’t reveal anything in terms of how the game would play). Will it be 2D? 3D? Capcom won’t say anything, other than the fact that they’re not interested in competing with the “realistic” fighting games on the market. Oh, and that the game is more than a year away. We’re just happy it’s coming.

Evan Shamoon

Blu-ray Central

Top Blu-ray picks for this holiday



PlayStation: The Official Magazine
PICK OF THE MONTH

Spider-Man High-Definition Trilogy Set

PRICE: $98.99 **RATED:** PG13

Movie audiences have spent north of two billion dollars flocking to Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man* series. It's hard to gauge the accuracy, but the symmetry of the $888 million gross take for the worldwide theatrical run of *Spider-Man 3* is oh-so pretty. Now the entire series is available in one package on Blu-ray, delivering a slew of extra features (including the ever-popular blooper reel) that should amply satiate the most ardent Spidey fans. That includes the original movie, plus *Spider-Man 2* and *2.1* that includes additional scenes. For the latest movie (also available in a two-disc standalone version that includes the full six extra hours of bonus content), you get some very cool features on the incredible special effects that went into bringing each super-heroic action to cinematic life.

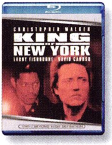
MOVIES ★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★

COMING SOON

A few Blu-ray movies heading to shelves in time for the holidays.

SUPERBAD SUPER-SIZED BLU-RAY
A smorgasbord of commentaries, auditions, features, and deleted scenes should satisfy fans come the Dec 4th two-disc release

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
Though Paramount has stated its movies will appear on HD DVD only (boo), Steven Spielberg's movies are exempt from that position. The first to appear is a planned 30th Anniversary production of his seminal sci-fi flick that will include all three versions (original theatrical release, special edition, and director's cut) and a second disc of bonus features all for $50.

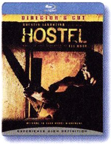


King of New York

PRICE: $29.99 **RATED:** R

Christopher Walken's turn as New York gangster Frank White has enjoyed cult status since its 1990 release when it failed to set the box office on fire. But between Walken's charismatic performance and the rap soundtrack, along with a pretty amazing story based on real events, it has plenty to make it a great rental. You have to be one of those fans to make it a purchase, however, and the extra commentaries are too self-indulgent to offer any genuine filmmaking insight. Still, Walken twirling and prancing is almost worth the price of admission in itself.

MOVIES ★★★½
FEATURES ★★

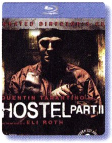


Hostel

PRICE: $28.95 **RATED:** R

Does horror get much more horrific? Movies like *Saw* deliver the supreme brutality that audiences have eaten up, and *Hostel* is not only in the same category, it manages to out-shock some of the ultimate shockers. The *Eurotrip*-like opening of hot European women demonstrating their famous (but still overstated) willingness to show their perfectly formed boobies quickly gives way to astonishingly brutal torture. If a lesson is to be derived from its plot, it's simply never to trust European hotties who like to spa… no matter how hot that hot is. *Hostel* is a fabulously brutal tale, and the alternate ending provided in the extras is easily as ominous as the bloody conclusion of the release version. It's hard to like, but the style, themes, and hardcore brutality give this film a devastating impact.

MOVIES ★★★★
FEATURES ★★★½

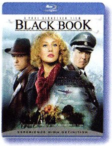


Hostel Part II

PRICE: $38.95 **RATED:** R

For this sequel writer/director Eli Roth flips the story well enough to maintain the horror vibe without simply producing more-of-the-same. This time the terrorized teens are women, and the plot reveals details of the bloodhound-tattooed network of sickos bidding big bucks for their choice of victim. Wonderful accident or sublime planning, the casting of two former *Desperate Housewives* husbands works perfectly, particularly in the grim concluding twist. Bijou Phillips is a great ugly American abroad, and Heather Matarazzo's role is as much shocking for its blood-soaked end as it is for the fact that the awkward kid from *Welcome to the Dollhouse* is the actress. While not as torturously shocking as the original, *Hostel 2* delivers its chills by unveiling the secret consortium who pay to kill.

MOVIES ★★★
FEATURES ★★★

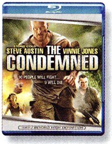


Black Book

PRICE: $38.96 **RATED:** R

A subtitled (and long) Dutch movie about the German occupation of Holland in WWII is hardly date night fare. But Paul Verhoeven's direction keeps the pace admirably swift, even if the core cinematography makes it too apparent that this 1940s setting was actually filmed in 2006. Any movie dealing with the subject of Nazi occupation, collaboration, and concepts of justice will deliver harsh images, and *Black Book* keeps them coming as the lead character plays chameleon to adapt and survive alongside the Dutch resistance. The imagery of the events delivers more impact than some of the supporting performances, but Clarice van Houten is superb in the lead, and ably carries the strength of character needed to survive while family and friends are summarily butchered.

MOVIES	★★★★
FEATURES	★★★


STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN
THE CONDEMNED
VINNIE JONES
10 PEOPLE WILL FIGHT... 9 WILL DIE.

The Condemned

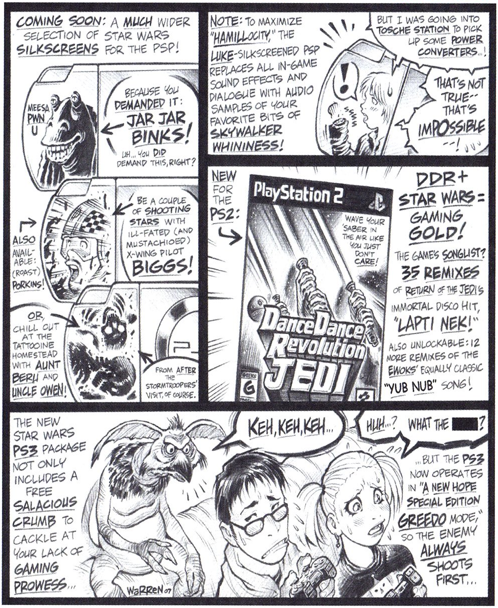
PRICE: $39.98 **RATED:** R

The concept is akin to *Battle Royale*, but the similarities end there between this schlock Steve Austin vehicle and the classically brutal Japanese movie. Wrestler Austin and former English soccer player Vinnie Jones "star" if that's the appropriate word — in a violent last man standing game show.

MOVIES	★★
FEATURES	★★½

THE STAR WARS LINE EXPANDS

by Adam Warren


COMING SOON: A MUCH WIDER SELECTION OF STAR WARS SILKSCREENS FOR THE PSP!
MEESA PWN U
BECAUSE YOU DEMANDED IT: JAR JAR BINKS!
UH... YOU DID DEMAND THIS, RIGHT?
ALSO AVAILABLE: (ROAST) PORKINS!
BE A COUPLE OF SHOOTING STARS WITH ILL-FATED (AND MUSTACHIOED) X-WING PILOT BIGGS!
OR, CHILL OUT AT THE TATTOOINE HOMESTEAD WITH AUNT BERU AND UNCLE OWEN!
FROM AFTER THE STORMTROOPERS' VISIT, OF COURSE.
NOTE: TO MAXIMIZE "HAMILLOCITY," THE LUKE-SILKSCREENED PSP REPLACES ALL IN-GAME SOUND EFFECTS AND DIALOGUE WITH AUDIO SAMPLES OF YOUR FAVORITE BITS OF SKYWALKER WHININESS!
BUT I WAS GOING INTO TOSCHE STATION TO PICK UP SOME POWER CONVERTERS...!
!
THAT'S NOT TRUE-- THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE--!
NEW FOR THE PS2:
PlayStation 2
WAVE YOUR 'SABER IN THE AIR LIKE YOU JUST DON'T CARE!
DanceDance Revolution JEDI
GEEKS G
DDR + STAR WARS = GAMING GOLD!
THE GAME'S SONGLIST? 35 REMIXES OF RETURN OF THE JEDI'S IMMORTAL DISCO HIT, "LAPTI NEK!"
ALSO UNLOCKABLE: 12 MORE REMIXES OF THE EWOKS' EQUALLY CLASSIC "YUB NUB" SONG!
THE NEW STAR WARS PS3 PACKAGE NOT ONLY INCLUDES A FREE SALACIOUS CRUMB TO CACKLE AT YOUR LACK OF GAMING PROWESS...
KEH, KEH, KEH...
HUH...?
WHAT THE [redacted]?
...BUT THE PS3 NOW OPERATES IN "A NEW HOPE SPECIAL EDITION GREEDO MODE," SO THE ENEMY ALWAYS SHOOTS FIRST...
WARREN 07

System Updates

What you need to know about Firmware 1.93.

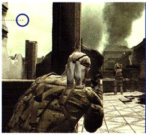
- Customize your wallpaper using images stored on a Memory Stick Duo or on your hard drive.
- Emoticons are now supported in messages you send to friends.
- Now use a USB keyboard to enter text into the web browser.
- Sort the game save files on your hard drive.
- Add bookmarks to the File menu of the browser
- Eject disc option added to the option menu for discs.

PSP: What you need to know about Firmware 3.71.

- Customize your own themes.
- Scene search now allows you to select scenes from thumbnail images on movies saved to your Memory Stick Duo.
- Listen to music while browsing photos as simultaneous playback is added.

Next month

In PlayStation: The Official Magazine



Metal Gear Solid IV: Guns of the Patriots, *Fallout 3*, *Killzone 2*, and many more lead the PlayStation 3 charge in 2008.

Plus, we're heading inside Ready at Dawn to bring you the complete scoop on ***God of War: Chains of Olympus***.

And PS3 multimedia users simply cannot miss our **complete guide to setting up your home network**. How to do everything you need to stream files, see photos, and play videos with your PlayStation 3 at the center of your entertainment setup.

SYNC

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Introducing SYNC. The available in-car technology powered by Microsoft® that lets you voice-activate your MP3 player, Bluetooth® phone and much more. syncmyride.com or text "band" to 4SYNC for info.

say, **"play artist: Band of Horses"**

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You talk. SYNC listens.™

Voice-activated in-car technology | Voice-activates your Bluetooth® phone

Driving while distracted can result in loss of vehicle control. Even when equipped with voice commands, only use

Now Playing
Band of Horses
Is there a Ghost
3:49
Cease To Begin

LINCOLN

MERCURY

Voice-activates your MP3 player | Speaks 3 languages

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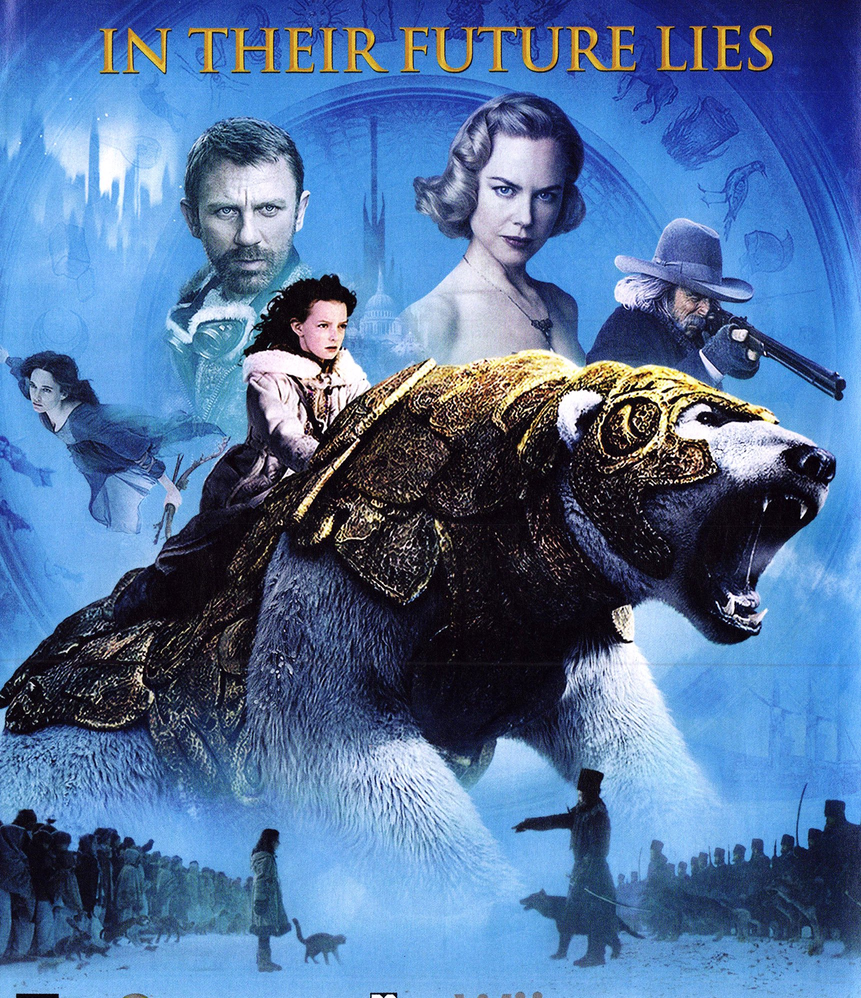

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THE FATE OF ALL WORLDS

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THE GOLDEN COMPASS™

THE OFFICIAL VIDEO GAME

Go beyond the silver screen and venture from the safety of Jordan College through the wilds of the frozen North and beyond as Lyra, her dæmon, Pan, and a giant Armored Ice Bear named Iorek. On an unforgettable journey filled with magic and mystery, you'll discover a destiny greater than you could have imagined.

IN STORES DECEMBER 4

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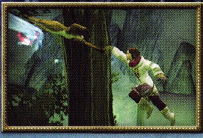
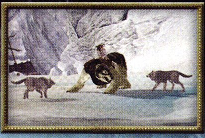
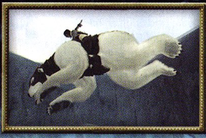
XBOX 360
PlayStation 2
PSP
PlayStation 3
Wii
Nintendo DS
The Golden Compass
SEGA



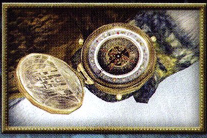
Pan's shape-shifting abilities give Lyra total freedom to explore.



Face off against fierce enemies as the ruthless Armored Ice Bear, Iorek.



Explore 11 incredible locations from the film including 2 that are unique to the game.



Master the mysterious Golden Compass - use it to uncover vital new information and unlock bonus content.

Shiny Entertainment

A2M

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Violence
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Hilde is unique in that she wields both a short sword for in-close attacks and a spear for stabbing foes at a distance.

Namco Bandai tested the PS3's online fighting game waters with a network play add-on pack for *Tekken 5: Dark Resurrection*, available for purchase from the PlayStation Store.

PS3 | P

Soul Calibur IV

First Look Preview

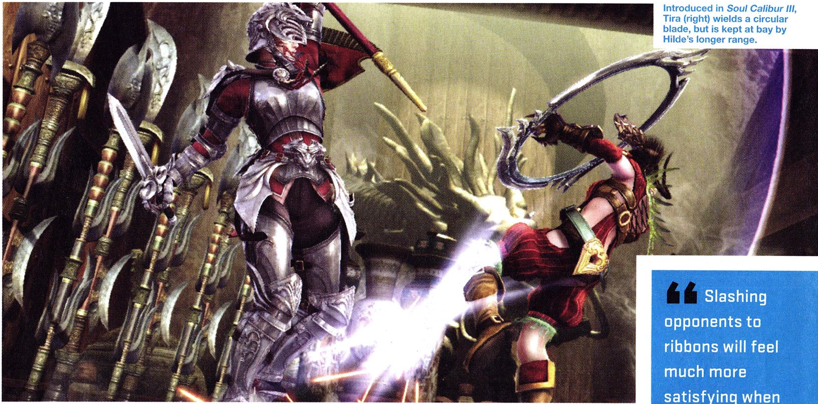
The legendary sword-fighting series hits PS3 – and takes the battle online

PS3 AVAILABLE: Spring 2008 GENRE: Fighting PUBLISHER: Namco Bandai DEVELOPER: Namco Bandai

One of the first games to run on Namco's PlayStation-based System 11 arcade hardware (the original *Tekken* is another), *Soul Edge* — or *Soul Blade* as it was re-titled for the home console market — kicked off what has become the best, most wildly popular weapons-based fighting series ever. It helped solidify PlayStation as the premiere platform for 3D fighting games, and now, after undergoing a name change to *Soul Calibur* (with three games under that flag, two on PS2) the franchise slashes onto PS3 looking bigger and better than ever.

Good (but not necessarily unexpected) news for the faithful: all of your favorite weapon-wielding combatants from the previous *Soul Caliburs* return in *Soul Calibur IV*. Of course, they don't look exactly like you remember them... they look much better. The artists at Namco Bandai have clearly brought what they've learned crafting the stunning CGI movies used in recent *Tekken* games to the table; *SCIV*'s fighters are easily their most detailed and well-animated yet. Still, they aren't photo-realistic, but that's never been the series' style. Instead, they look like digital actors from a high-budget 3D animated movie come to life on your PS3. It's a stunning treat for fans, and a real showpiece for the hardware.

Joining the ranks for this installment is newcomer Hilde, a character that the game's designers are especially proud of — and believe players will enjoy — for a couple of reasons. First, she dual-wields two different weapons — a short sword and a spear — which is a first for the series. This should make her an ideal character for newcomers, as she's adept at both long- and short-range combat. Secondly, she's not your typical female fighter. While Ivy, Taki, and the rest of the game's



Introduced in *Soul Calibur III*, Tira (right) wields a circular blade, but is kept at bay by Hilde's longer range.

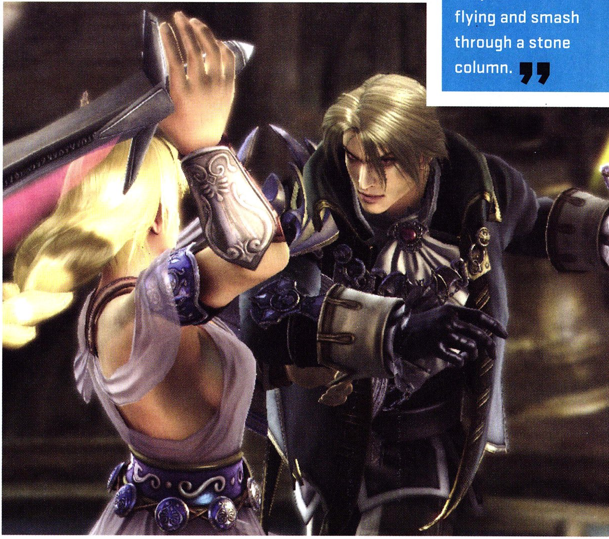
Astaroth has always been a formidable fighter; now he can add being extremely disturbing to look at to his resumé.

ladies show their figures — some would say to a cheeky degree — Hilde is clad head to toe in armor. While it doesn't serve a practical purpose (she's as prone to damage as anyone else) it surely is a welcome new aesthetic.

New Stages of History

The fighting arenas themselves are also undergoing some changes for this latest — and if you go by the wording of the teaser trailer narration, possibly the last — game in the series. They've been designed to be larger, meaning that ring outs will be less common. Destructible set pieces are also being added

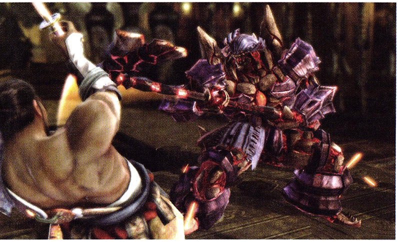
> “Slashing opponents to ribbons will feel much more satisfying when they're sent flying and smash through a stone column.”



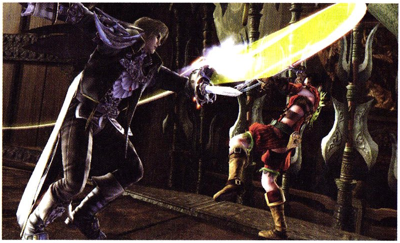
Cassandra and Raphael return to battle, more vividly detailed and animated than ever before.

Mum's the word on whether *Soul Calibur IV* will feature any surprise cameos from other games' characters, as we saw with Heihachi (of *Tekken* fame) joining the roster in *Soul Calibur II*.

Soul Calibur IV continued



Mitsurugi going out of focus as he flies toward the "camera" is a great example of the game's depth of field effect.



Sigfried's new duds make him look like he'd be right at home in a *Castlevania* game.

> "The characters look like digital actors from a high-budget 3D animated movie come to life on your PS3."

to the mix; slashing opponents to ribbons will feel much more satisfying when they're sent flying and smash through a stone column. One completely new stage has been shown; it's Mauritius, an island nation off the east coast of Africa that was home to the now-extinct dodo bird (though it's alive and well in-game — hooray for fantasy!).

The game's designers are also improving the series' eight-way run and evasion system, so moving around while fighting will feel less restrictive, while still allowing for the precise input required for special attacks. A new, but secret meter is being added in addition to the life bar. Given the fact that series director, Katsutoshi Sasaki, has told Japanese gaming publication Famitsu that players will have a completely new way to defeat enemies other than traditional attacks or ring outs, we can only deduce that this meter has something to do with this mysterious mechanic.

Online For the First Time

One major gameplay addition that's not being kept secret is the inclusion of online play — not just leaderboards, folks — for the first time in the series. Details are limited as of press time, but Sasaki did state during Tokyo Game Show 07 that his team is working diligently to minimize lag — a significant problem in creating an online fighter so dependent on timing — but that a certain amount is unavoidable. We're hopeful that *Soul Calibur III*'s character creation mode will make a return, more robust than before, so that players from around the world can take to the online "stage of history" with their own entirely unique fighters. Randy Nelson

Creating your own fighter was one of the best parts of *Soul Calibur III*. We were able to closely replicate Solid Snake, Cloud Strife, and other PlayStation favorites in the game.

PS3 FIGHTER WATCH

Here's a look at three of the other contenders for PS3's fighting game crown coming to the system over the next 12 months.

Tekken 6

PUBLISHER: Namco Bandai
RELEASE: Spring 2008

The first *Tekken* game on PS3 is technically *Tekken 5: Dark Resurrection* for PlayStation Network, but the first game in the series designed especially for the hardware won't hit until next year. The game sports significant visuals upgrades over *Tekken 5: DR* and has been making rounds on the Japanese arcade circuit, drawing crowds eager to play and give their feedback to Namco Bandai.

Super Street Fighter II Turbo HD Remix

PUBLISHER: Capcom
RELEASE: Fall 2007

Through a collaboration between Capcom, Backbone Entertainment (the makers of *Death Jr.*), and comic book art collective Udon, this classic installment in the *Street Fighter* series — still played competitively at the tournament level — is coming to PlayStation Network with completely re-drawn, HD characters and backgrounds, in addition to online play. Not only is this looking great so far, it stands to be one of the biggest acts of fan service in gaming history.

Marvel Fighting Game [working title]

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
RELEASE: TBA 2008

Under development by the same crew at EA Chicago that brought us *Fight Night* and *Def Jam Icon*, this open-environment fighter will pit the likes of Spider-Man, Captain America, and The Hulk against one another in huge environments where your greatest weapon will be the stage itself. Each character will have their own advantages based on their unique super powers; we hope that the fighting system, once it is finally revealed, will prove to be more balanced than the one used by *Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects*, EA's very first stab at a Marvel fighter on PS2 and PSP.

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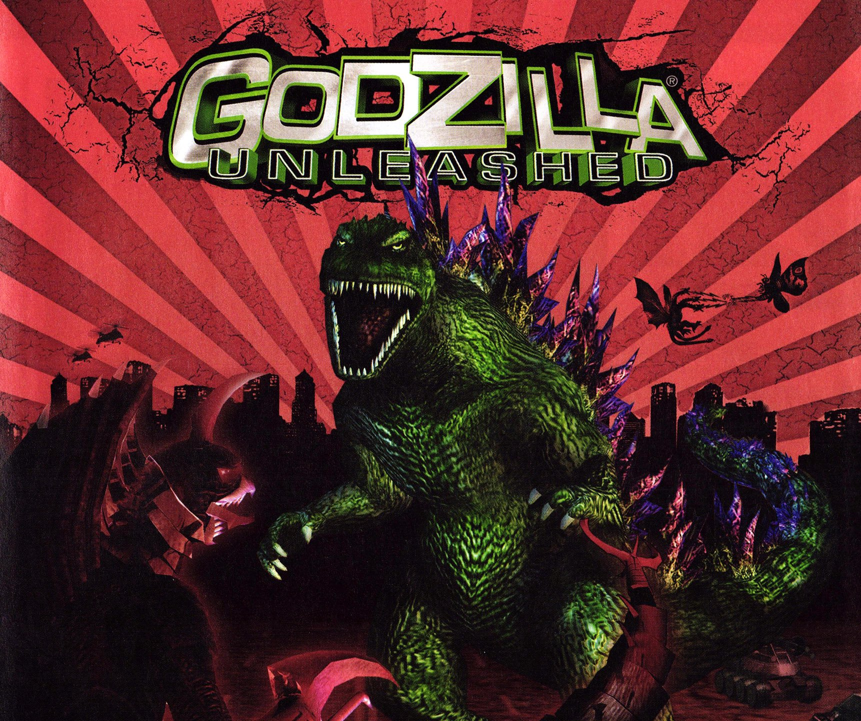

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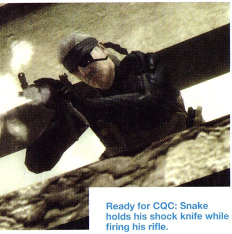
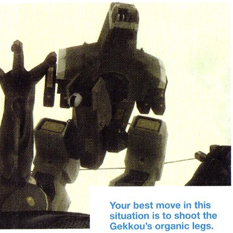


Ready for CQC: Snake holds his shock knife while firing his rifle.

Snake has a cloud of odor around him from hiding in a dumpster for too long.



Your best move in this situation is to shoot the Gekkou's organic legs.

Metal Gear Solid 4:

Guns of the Patriots

In-Depth Preview

All the latest details on Solid Snake's final mission

PS3 | **P**

PS3 AVAILABLE: Early 2008 GENRE: Action PUBLISHER: Konami DEVELOPER: Kojima Productions

The Octocamo suit has a separate mask that can be toggled on and off, so that enemies don't spot your "floating" head.

Drebin, a "weapons launderer," provides Snake with new guns and upgrades he can use.

Kojima Productions has instituted "radio silence" as the release of *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots* nears. Thankfully, the studio revealed a wealth of new information, including character details and gameplay specifics, before locking itself in for the long grind towards final code.

❶ Psyche Meter and the Threat Ring

Kojima has done away with the Stamina Meter used in *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater*. In its stead, you'll see a Psyche Meter. Solid Snake's psyche will be strained when he comes under heavy fire and takes cover for too long, for instance, but he will be able to regain composure by perusing the pages of a men's magazine! Conversely, Snake will get "psyched" when engaged in heavy combat, becoming more lethal as adrenaline courses through his veins.

Seen in earlier screens from the game, the Threat Ring surrounds Snake and changes in intensity to indicate how likely he is to be spotted by enemies given his current surroundings and how effectively his chameleon-like Octocamo is being used. "Bumps" on the ring indicate perceived threats and will move and grow in size as enemies come closer.

❷ More Allies and Enemies Revealed

Kojima has revealed a new support character, Drebin, who will provide Snake with weaponry that's been stripped of its DNA-linked SOP components, which would otherwise enable only its "assigned" soldier to fire it. Also introduced is Sunny, the brilliant young daughter of *MGS2*'s Olga. Liquid Ocelot's personal army, the Haven Troopers, have also been shown. Wearing armor similar to Raiden's, their moves in combat are perfectly synchronized via nanomachine network. Though their faces are obscured by sinister-looking helmets, they appear to be female.

❸ A Peek at the Ending?

The latest (and final) trailer makes it appear as if the final boss battle in the game will occur on Shadow Moses Island from the first *MGS*, and see Solid Snake piloting Metal Gear Rex in battle against a Metal Gear Ray with Liquid Ocelot behind its controls.

❹ DualShock 3 and Multiplayer

Hideo Kojima was very vocal about the SIXAXIS controller's lack of rumble; he must have been a happy man when he learned of the DualShock 3, which will be supported in *MGS4*. Also, although Kojima Productions is developing *Metal Gear Online* as a standalone game, it has been confirmed that *MGS4* will feature limited online play. If past experience with the series is anything to go by, that could very well translate to "incredibly deep co-op" or the like by the time the game ships. Here's hoping. Randy Nelson

Before the DualShock 3 was announced, Kojima indicated that he may do away with the Threat Ring mechanic should Sony re-introduce rumble to PS3's SIXAXIS controller, but as of press time, it still exists in-game along with vibration.

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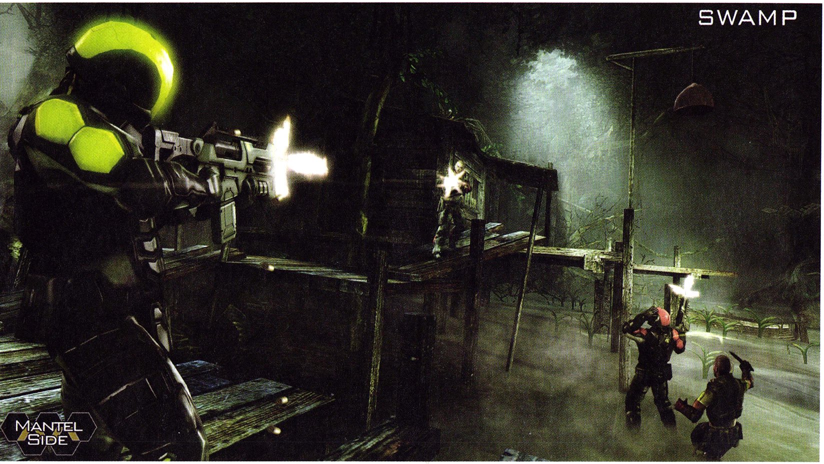


This swamp serves as one of the game's multiplayer arenas. You can see a rebel causing a malfunction in a Mantel trooper's Nectar unit in the lower right-hand corner.

Feel that rumble? You'll feel every shot, hit, and explosion thanks to *Haze*'s confirmed support for the PS3's upcoming DualShock 3 controller.

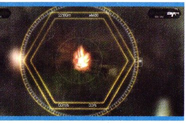
PS3 | P

Haze

Hands-On Preview

The creators of *TimeSplitters* bring a thrilling new take on future combat exclusively to PS3

PS3 AVAILABLE: November GENRE: First-Person Shooter PUBLISHER: Ubisoft DEVELOPER: Free Radical



Performance-enhancing drugs. In the sporting world, their use is scandalous. In the future of *Haze*, soldiers are taken off active duty if they're not sufficiently dosed on Nectar, a "nutritional supplement" developed by pharmaceutical powerhouse and global military force Mantel.

Nectar "administration" is the core mechanic of the first half of *Haze*'s narrative, where you assume the role of a Mantel soldier fighting cannibalistic rebels, the "Promise Hand," alongside squad mates in South America. Diving straight in at the game's beginning, we found ourselves on the deck of a Mantel land carrier (imagine, if you can, an aircraft carrier on treads), from which we were flown to the frontlines onboard awaiting VTOL transport. In this case, the front was extremely dense jungle, and bullets were flying at us before our bird's doors even opened.

Before we could return fire, we needed to juice up. Holding L2 delivers a dose of Nectar. A meter displays the amount of the drug in your bloodstream; you don't need to max it out, but you can overdose if you don't let off L2 soon enough. We learned that the hard way, as under the extreme influence we fired uncontrollably in every direction, hoping our fellow soldiers wouldn't be killed — or, worse, kill us. A proper dose injected, we saw the immediate effects of Nectar on gameplay. For starters, our enemies took on a red caste that made them stand out from the environment, even when behind cover. It was akin to being a wild animal with extremely heightened senses. This carried over into the ability to anticipate danger; grenades thrown at us triggered distinct ripples on-screen, and, later, while driving a vehicle, we could spot roadside bombs before they detonated. Nectar also gave us two disparate advantages: greatly enhanced speed of movement and intense concentration while sniping.

The Nectar level slowly depletes after a dose is taken, and you are only given five doses to administer. The doses

Standing still during combat will get you killed, but take a breather afterwards and you'll be treated to a nice touch: a butterfly will fly in and land on the barrel of your rifle.

"recharge" over time, but we found a much quicker way to get more Nectar: taking it from our comrades. Pressing Square while they're nearby will "steal" it from them.

In the dense jungle, we found ourselves treating the drug as a precious commodity. Enemies were cleverly camouflaged and seemingly everywhere at once. Using Nectar — in moderation so as not to run out — proved absolutely essential in this portion of the game. Dosing up before sniping proved very effective and rewarding, as did sending enemies flying hundreds of yards with our juiced-up melee strikes.

Rebel Tactics

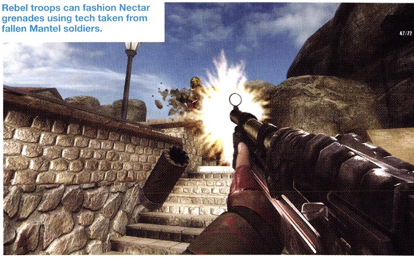
The game's story eventually sees you joining the rebels' battle against Mantel. At this point, we wondered how the game could remain as interesting without the ability to use Nectar. Oh, but we could use it... in different ways.

We were able to fashion improvised Nectar grenades from the supplies on downed Mantel soldiers. Tossing one of these near our enemies created a cloud of the drug, which temporarily overdosed their systems. This proved to be a great diversion, especially when low on health, since any unaffected enemies will focus on avoiding or killing their crazed comrades.

We also had a knife added to our inventory. It's fairly effective on its own, but each time you walk over a fallen Mantel trooper it becomes coated in Nectar. In this state you can use it up-close or, if you're feeling lucky, attempt to throw it at range. A successful throw results in a one-hit knife-to-the-head kill. In close-quarters, you'll cause them to OD.

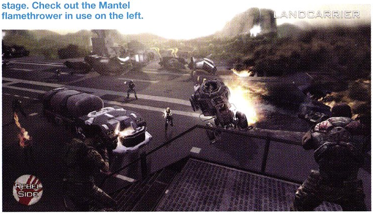
If we were close to death, and pressed L2 fast enough, we could go limp and fool our foes into ignoring our immobile carcass. If an enemy happened to be nearby when we felt our health was sufficiently restored, we could double-tap X to spring to our feet and surprise him. Performing a melee attack quickly followed by tapping Square is another trick; you'll grab his gun, shoot him with it, and take it for your own, all in one motion.

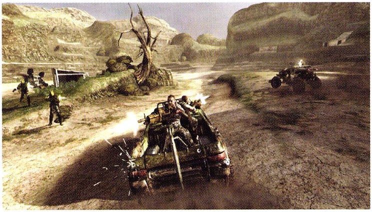
> ❝ The effect of Nectar on gameplay is akin to becoming a wild animal with extremely heightened senses. ❞



Rebel troops can fashion Nectar grenades using tech taken from fallen Mantel soldiers.

A massive Mantel land carrier serves as another multiplayer stage. Check out the Mantel flamethrower in use on the left.



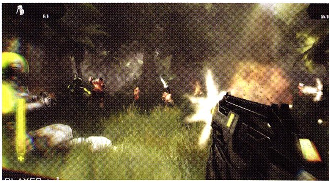


Both sides have access to vehicles with multiple gunner positions for friends or A.I. comrades to take.

We came away from our all-too-brief stay in *Haze*'s fictional future truly impressed by what Free Radical is crafting both gameplay-wise and on the technology front. No doubt about it: this is a true next-gen game in every respect, and we can't wait to see how all of its intriguing concepts come together in the final experience.

Randy Nelson

The effects of a Nectar dose can be seen here, both in the aura effect around targets and the stylized blurring of the screen.



First Multiplayer Details

Haze will feature online and LAN play for up to 24 players, with modes to include Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, and Team Assault. In addition, up to four players can tackle the main campaign locally via split-screen or online, with the ability to join or leave the fight at any time. Six online fighting grounds are planned for the final game. Here are the first four to be revealed.

COPPER MINES
Mantel is stockpiling Nectar deep in the mines. The Promise Hand rebels plan to break in and steal it.

NECTAR CROPS
Mantel is growing crops in the swamp. The Promise Hand intends to burn them to the ground.

PRISONERS OF WAR
Mantel has captured a number of Promise Hand soldiers. If they don't escape, they will be interrogated.

LAND CARRIER ASSAULT
The Promise Hand wants to launch its last missile at the Mantel Land Carrier, but if the Carrier's defenses can't be deactivated, the missile won't be able to lock on.

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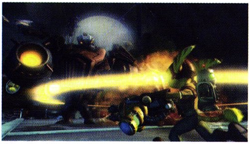

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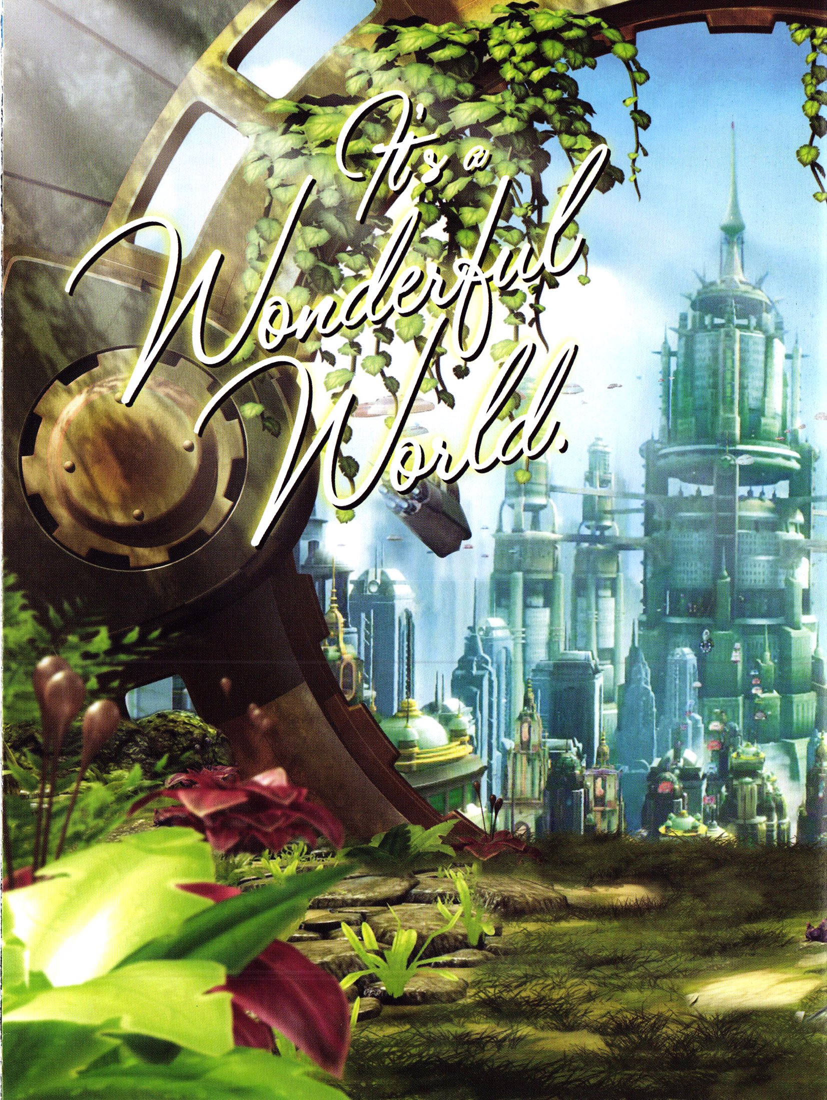

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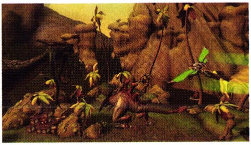

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Final Fantasy VII: Crisis Core

Hands-On Preview

Gloriously living up to the *"Final Fantasy VII"* name

PSP AVAILABLE: TBA 2008 GENRE: Action RPG PUBLISHER: Square Enix DEVELOPER: Square Enix

Aerith is back, and will again be voiced by Mena Suvari.

Look Familiar? Many scenes from *Crisis Core* will remind you of *FFVII.*

Final Fantasy VII is one of the best games of all time. Its story, gameplay, and CGI animations changed our perception of games as a medium. Square Enix's "*Compilation of FFVII*" project, however, has been… disappointing. *Advent Children* was a mediocre movie at best, and we still have a bitter aftertaste in our mouth from *Dirge of Cerberus*. The anime and cell phone games released in Japan haven't garnered much praise, either. You'd be forgiven, then, for being wary about the latest *Compilation* game, *Crisis Core*. Clearly something has gone right, however, as it has been flying off the shelves in Japan, spurring sales of PSPs at the same time. We managed to bag a retail copy of the Japanese version to put through its paces and let you know what to expect.

Setting The Stage

So what exactly is *Crisis Core*? We were kept in the dark for a long time regarding the game's story and gameplay, but now that we have a build, we can reveal some of its secrets. Set seven years prior to the events of *Final Fantasy VII*, *Crisis Core* centers on the story of Zack, the Soldier that worked alongside Sephiroth, and Cloud's mentor of sorts. When the game opens, he's only a Soldier second class, but he has big dreams of reaching first class and becoming a hero. Zack, Sephiroth, and newcomer Angeal are dispatched to Wutai to investigate the disappearance of a number of Soldiers and their leader, Genesis, another Soldier first class. The story then unfolds in twists and turns, and should shed some light on the more confusing aspects of *FFVII*. Zack encounters characters both old and new on his journey, becomes friends with Cloud, and we learn how Cloud inherited Zack's legacy. It's a powerful story that draws you in as much as the original game, and it ends where *FFVII* begins — with Cloud on a train in Midgar.

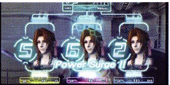
Fresh New Gameplay

Crisis Core is an action RPG, with much more active gameplay than *FFVII*. You will still get into random encounters as you explore new environments, but this time there are no loading or transition screens. Enemies rise from the ground and you jump right into battle. Fighting itself is real-time, not turn-based, and you're able to move freely, block, dodge, and attack at will. The shoulder buttons scroll through your battle command menu, allowing you to use Materia to cast spells, attack, or use items and other skills with the press of a button. It's simple and fun, and you're rewarded for using smart tactics like circling behind your enemy.

The new battle system is called "Digital Mind Wave," or "DMW," named after the game's special attack system. If you have Soldier Points, three reels in the upper-left corner of the screen will spin as you fight. The reels have the faces of characters Zack has met, and if you line up three of the same face you'll activate a special attack based on that character. (For instance, three Aeriths gives you a support ability, while three Sephiroths

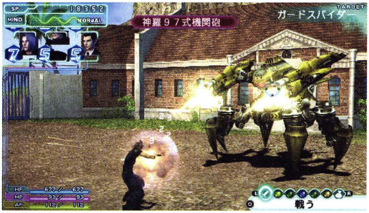
To avoid damage, keep on the move in battle using the square button to roll — it's especially useful against spells, which often target your location and not you.

Materia World

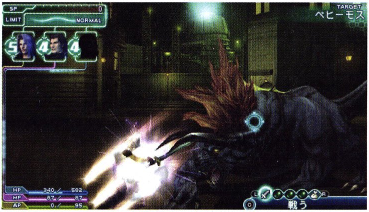


Materia is back in *Crisis Core*, but it works differently. You can still find new ones and equip them to use new abilities, but the similarities end there. While Materia still levels up, it now does so through the DMW system. Each one is assigned to a slot in your inventory, and when two or more of that number come up in your DMW slots, that Materia will level up, giving you stronger versions of the abilities it grants. In addition, you can now synthesize Materia to combine their abilities and get new Materia. It may sound complicated, but it actually makes a lot of sense, and you'll be using some cool spells in no time.

Information from developers of *Crisis Core* puts the gameplay time at around 100 hours. That's pretty amazing considering a UMD only holds 1.8GB (a DVD can hold up to 4.2GB and Blu-ray an incredible 50GB)!



You still take damage when blocking, but it's a significantly lower amount.



If you circle behind your enemy, they won't be able to counterattack.

unleashes a powerful sword attack on your enemy.) It can seem confusing at first, but since it's totally random, you don't have to worry about it unless the faces line up. The Limit Break-style moves you can activate using DMW can be awesome.

PSP's Potential Unleashed

To propel a game into the stratosphere of classic, it needs to push aspects beyond even its story and gameplay. *Crisis Core* also unveils some spectacular graphics. The game starts off with a gorgeous FMV featuring Zack on a train, but the in-game graphics look great, too. The characters are rendered beautifully, with facial expressions and gestures that really reflect their moods and give the dialogue emotional depth. Even the environments look good, which was a major failing of *Dirge of Cerberus*.

On top of the lovely visuals, *Crisis Core* uses voice acting on most cutscenes and, despite the absence of legendary series composer Nobuo Uematsu, a decent soundtrack helps convey the mood. The controls feel natural and don't obstruct your ability to manipulate characters and the environment. The camera is totally automated in battle, but in our playthrough didn't present any problems, and always kept us focused on what we needed to see. Outside of battle you can rotate the camera with the shoulder buttons, but in our playtest we rarely had to, and were relieved not to have to worry about controlling both that and the characters.

System Seller

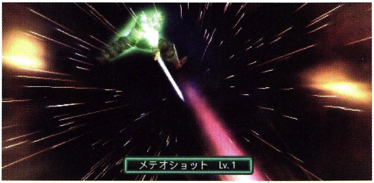
The *Compilation of FFVII* project offered so much hope for expanding on the amazing story of *Final Fantasy VII*, but up until now all the different games and movies have somewhat disappointed the hardcore fan base. Now that we've experienced *Crisis Core*, though, we can understand why it's been single-handedly responsible for the sale of thousands of PSPs in Japan since its release. We can't wait to get our hands on the fully cooked U.S. version. Tom Holoien

CC's story is complex and full of betrayal.

> “*Crisis Core* is an action RPG, with much more active gameplay than *FFVII*.”

Newcomer Angeal is as complex a character as all the old favorites.

Sephiroth: is he the hero Zack thinks he is, or the villain we know from *FFVII*?



Many DMW moves, like Meteo Shot, are inspired by moves from *FFVII*.

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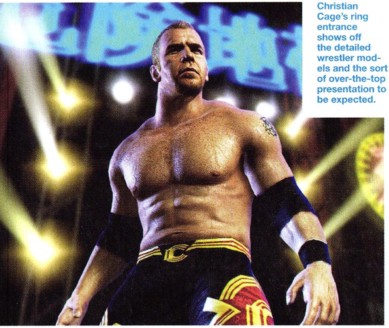
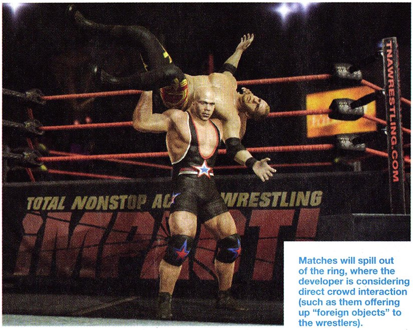
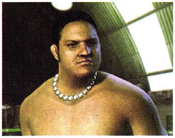


Christian Cage's ring entrance shows off the detailed wrestler models and the sort of over-the-top presentation to be expected.



Matches will spill out of the ring, where the developer is considering direct crowd interaction (such as them offering up "foreign objects" to the wrestlers).

TNA Impact **will take you from Mexico to Japan, but you'll only fight in or immediately around the ring (no locker room brawls).**



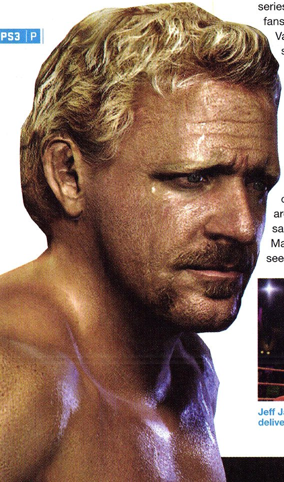
Samoa Joe: One of the most popular TNA wrestlers and headliner of some very prominent matches.

TNA Impact!

First Look Preview

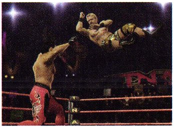
SmackDown's no longer the only wrestling game in town

PS3 AVAILABLE: Spring 2008 GENRE: Fighting PUBLISHER: Midway DEVELOPER: Midway Studios – Los Angeles



For years, *WWE SmackDown* has been the de facto wrestling game on PlayStation consoles. While the series has always been great, fans consistently demand more. Variety, the adage goes, is the spice of life.

Enter Midway's *TNA Impact!*, a game that, like the show it's based on, provides an alternative to what would otherwise be a WWE monopoly. "[Recent wrestling videogames] are slow and sluggish, the controls are often overly complex, and the animations aren't entertaining enough," says Midway's Design Director Mark Turmell. "So instead of seeing long, non-interactive moves play out, *TNA Impact!*'s moves are quick, require fighting game-style interactivity, and result in high-flying action that wrestling fans want to see."



Jeff Jarret goes off the top rope to deliver a flying elbow to Sting.

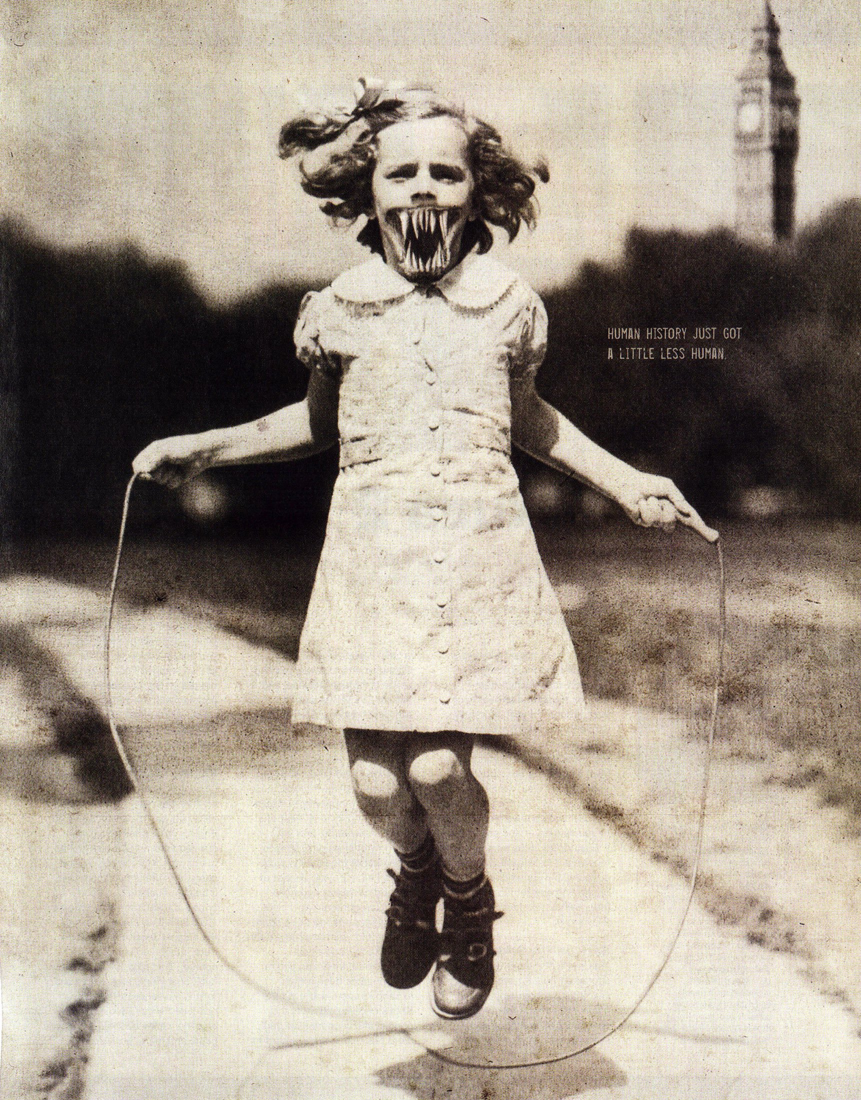
The actual gameplay takes its inspiration from *TNA Impacts!*'s competition — both past and present. "One of our favorite wrestling games is [*WWF*] *No Mercy* on the N64," Turmell says. "Move reversals, countering counters, and seeing new animation states was a big part of the fun. The intuitively responsive controls of *TNA Impact!* provide eye-popping reversals, and open up plenty of fresh grappling states."

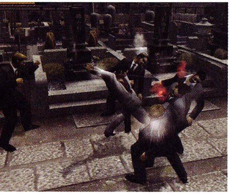
One area that the *SmackDown* series excels at is Create-A-Superstar, and no wrestling game is complete without it. Don't worry: Midway has that covered. "Create-a-wrestler is a key feature of our game. Even though this is our first *TNA* title, we have lots of experience developing this feature," explains Turmell. "The player selects not only his appearance and attire, but also his wrestling styles and move sets. As the player advances through the story, new items are unlocked and he earns money for the purchase of additional items. We're also working on a very cool decal system and some crazy face morphing technology to bring much more realism to your created wrestler."

TNA Impact! seems to have realism in spades, with looks that jump straight from a TV presentation. Says Turmell, "The official TNA commentary team of Mike Tenay and Don West have done an amazing job on our gameplay commentary." As you can see, the game looks astonishing, even at this relatively early stage. "At the core of *TNA Impact!* you'll find Unreal Engine 3," Turmell explains, "but because of our close relationship with the *Unreal* folks and extensive modifications, our version has been unleashed to run at a solid 60fps, which provides both amazing graphics and responsive gameplay."

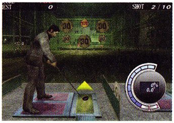
With jaw-dropping visuals and an emphasis on recreating TNA's signature high-impact action, *WWE SmackDown* may have a real fight on its hands to retain the next-gen wrestling crown.

Tom Holoien

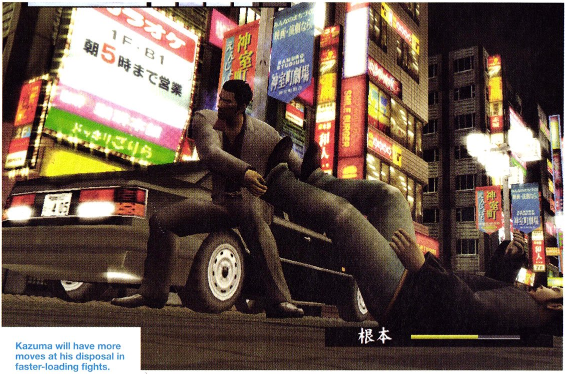

HUMAN HISTORY JUST GOT
A LITTLE LESS HUMAN.



You can change your target mid-combo, ensuring the fights flow more realistically.



Like the original *Yakuza*, this sequel will feature several side games (shown: driving range).



Kazuma will have more moves at his disposal in faster-loading fights.

Yakuza 2

First Look Preview

Back to bashing skulls in Japan's criminal underworld

Cinematic camera angles used during fights really sell each blow.

PS2 AVAILABLE: TBA 2008 GENRE: Action PUBLISHER: Sega DEVELOPER: Sega Entertainment NE R&D

If you were given the chance to assume the role of a don't-take-nuthin'-from-nobody mobster and beat your way through Tokyo's underbelly, wouldn't you take it? What if, along the way, you got to uncover a story of underworld intrigue, filled with characters equally as cool as you? Well, we all thought you'd say yes… but when Sega's *Yakuza* came out last year, most of you said no — and as a result it was unclear if the sequel would receive a U.S. release. Those of you who were holding your breath can now let it out; our fears were unfounded — *Yakuza 2* is coming.

Back on The Streets

Yakuza 2's plot picks up with the supremely cool Kazuma Kiryu, a year after the events of the first game. He's off to Osaka to take on a new rival and bring some semblance of harmony to the volatile Japanese mob scene. Of course, the best way to bring peace is through violence, and *Yakuza 2* improves upon the excellent fighting system from the first game.

Battle transitions are more seamless in *Yakuza 2*, thanks to shortened load times. Kazuma has a bevy of new moves, such as smashing opponents' heads together and kicking weapons out of their hands, and you can now change directions in mid-combo; the inability to do so was an annoying aspect of the original game's combat. You again generate new skills through experience point distribution, and you have more items available to bash skulls.

Of course, the world you're exploring has been further expanded upon, and even the Kabukicho-like city from the original seems more alive and more real than before — hard to believe, considering the amazing ambiance of the first game is what really sold its story. Once you get to Osaka, you'll feel like you've stepped into Japan (without the jet lag, of course), which, coupled with the game's great story, will probably leave you gripping your controller waiting to see what happens next.

Voicing Opinion

Of course, one aspect of the original that really hurt its Japanese feel was the profanity-laced English voice track. Oh, it was star-studded… but it was just so out of sync with the setting and characters that it hurt more than it helped. Thankfully, as confirmed in PSM issue 130, *Yakuza 2* will be hitting our shores with the original Japanese voiceover track intact (and subtitled, of course). That said, we can't really think of anything else we'd want to see in a sequel to *Yakuza*, because *Yakuza 2* looks like everything we loved about the first game and more. Tom Holoien

PS2 | P

Ryu ga Gotoku Kenzan!

Along with the announcement of the U.S. release of *Yakuza 2* came the stunning announcement of the new sequel, *Ryu ga Gotoku Kenzan!* — a PS3-exclusive set in 1605 and starring none other than legendary samurai Miyamoto Musashi. Very little has been revealed so far, other than the story centers around Miyamoto's past and a conspiracy surrounding the Battle of Sekigahara (the battle that united Japan), but we certainly hope that it makes its way Stateside following its 2008 release in Japan.

Although *Yakuza's* voice track was pretty laughable, it featured a number of Hollywood stars, including Michael Madsen, Elisha Cuthbert, and Luke Skywalker himself, Mark Hamill.

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— *Game Informer*

"... a highly playable action game that will satisfy even the most demanding FPS junkies."
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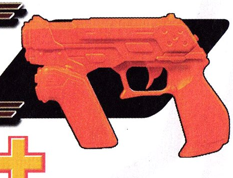

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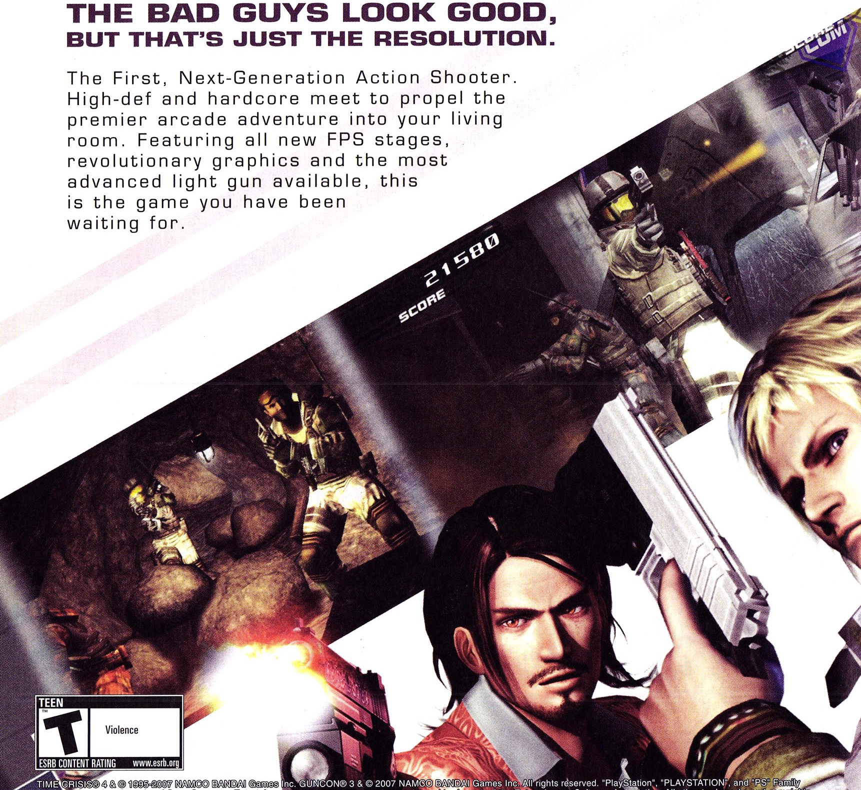

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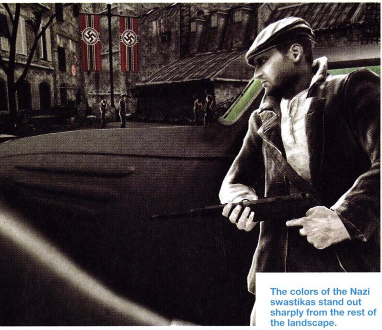
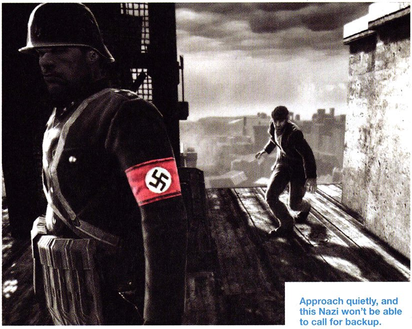


The colors of the Nazi swastikas stand out sharply from the rest of the landscape.



Approach quietly, and this Nazi won't be able to call for backup.

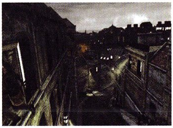
A 1942 Alfred Hitchcock film and a 1985 computer game (in which you play a ninja!) share the title *Saboteur* with this game.

Saboteur

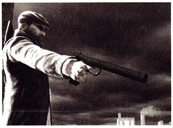
First Look Preview

Revive the will to fight in the citizens of Paris

PS3 AVAILABLE: TBA GENRE: Action/Adventure PUBLISHER: TBA DEVELOPER: Pandemic



Sean must navigate tricky terrain to avoid detection.



Even in black and white, the game looks amazing.

During World War II not every opponent of the invading Nazi regime was a military fatigue-wearing infantryman. Some were smart-mouthed archeologists with penchants for whips and fedoras. Others were businessmen who employed Jews in their factories. A few — like Sean, the Irish protagonist of *Saboteur* — were politically apathetic, womanizing, racecar-driving brawlers, who just so happened to be in Paris when the Nazis took over. Sean remains nonchalant during the occupation — that is until high-level Nazi officials slaughter his friends and family. Then he embarks on a journey of revenge.

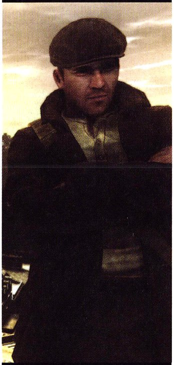
Saboteur is a stealth-based action game — think over-the-top action a la John McClane from the *Die Hard* series coupled with a *Metal Gear Solid*-style sneak-fest — set in a beautifully modeled, open world Paris. One way to remain at large is to crawl above or below the city, but another is to blend in with the crowd. For example, if you spy soldiers nearby, you can grab a nearby girl and start smooching as a form a camouflage (any excuse). Plus, because Sean has no connection with the military, he fights with his fists like a blue-collar worker — though his fighting style develops the more he brawls.

Stealth and action play an equal role in *Saboteur*. So if you're crawling across a hallway and are seen, it won't take too long for the guards to "cool down" and resume their original duties, assuming you find a good place to hide. Also, their patrol routes are shorter than in similar titles, emphasizing the fast-paced feel of this game. You won't need to spend a long time just crouching around, waiting.

The game utilizes the unique "Will to Fight" system, which paints the world in an intense, film noir black and white with only Nazi paraphernalia (like swastikas) in color. When you start out, Parisians flee when you get into trouble. However, as you take out enemy soldiers, the "will to fight" returns to the citizenry — as does the city's color — and passers-by will come to your aid.

To match the game's art style and original storyline, Pandemic decided to bathe *Saboteur* in a jazz-based soundtrack, though we're told to expect "new takes" on "classic pieces." With a track record like Pandemic's (*Full Spectrum Warrior*, *Star Wars: Battlefront*, *Destroy All Humans!*, *Mercenaries*) and a WWII concept this unique, *Saboteur* is definitely a game to watch. Teresa Dun

Real Life Resistance



Sean, the protagonist of *Saboteur*, is based on the WWII war hero Charles Frederick William Grover-Williams. He, too, was a racecar driver. He was enlisted in the Special Operations Executive to help the French Resistance and built a circuit of operatives in Paris. Their duties included sabotaging enemy operations. Eventually, though, he was caught and sent to Berlin for execution.

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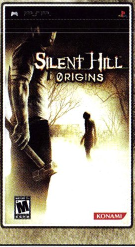

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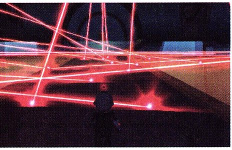
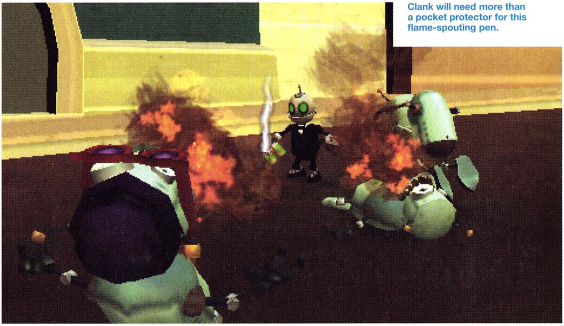


Navigate through these lasers by playing a rhythm mini-game.



Clank will need more than a pocket protector for this flame-spouting pen.

Here's a tidbit you didn't know: *Ratchet & Clank* was bundled with the PS2 in Japan. To make Ratchet appeal to the audience there, the developers tweaked his face, giving him anime-style eyes and larger eyebrows.

Secret Agent Clank

Ratchet's robot sidekick finally takes the limelight

First Look Preview

PSP AVAILABLE: TBA 2008 GENRE: Action/Adventure PUBLISHER: Sony DEVELOPER: High Impact Games

Ratchet & Clank Release Rollcall

Unfortunately, 2008 (the projected release date) is still a long ways off. To tide you over until then, pick up a copy of an older *Ratchet & Clank* game you may have missed. Here's the complete list:

RATCHET & CLANK (2002, PS2): The series is launched! Our two heroes are introduced, as is Captain Qwark.

GOING COMMANDO (2003, PS2): Ratchet is given a more user-friendly attitude as our favorite pair blast off to shake things up in the Bogon Galaxy.

UP YOUR ARSENAL (2004, PS2): The first game in the series to offer online competitive multiplayer. Stop Dr. Nefarious from his evil plan to turn everyone into robots.

DEADLOCKED (2005, PS2): This title features only Ratchet and focuses on shooting instead of puzzles and platforming.

GOING MOBILE (2005, MOBILE PHONES): Ratchet and Clank are transported into your cell phone and have to fight their way out.

SIZE MATTERS (2007, PSP): While on vacation, Ratchet and Clank discover a forgotten race of inventors with a sinister plot.

FUTURE: TOOLS OF DESTRUCTION (2007, PS3): The series goes high-def. Travel with the pair to yet another galaxy where Ratchet learns more about his origins.

Robin, Luigi, Chewbacca, Samwise Gamgee… sidekicks have existed as long as their hero attention-grabbers, but how many get to hop into a fancy tux, don the persona of their secret agent alter ego, utilize an arsenal of cleverly disguised weapons, and star in their own full-length game? We know of at least one. Smart-mouthed, metallic Clank, from the *Ratchet & Clank* series, will be the hero of 2008's PSP title *Secret Agent Clank*. High Impact Games, developer of the fantastic *Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters*, has been pegged to craft this game, so our expectations are already high.

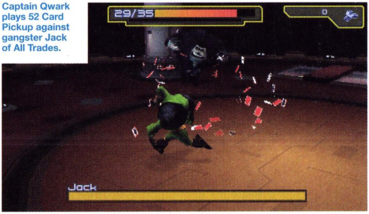
Secret Agent Clank is set between the events of *Size Matters* and the recent PS3 stunner *Tools of Destruction*. When Ratchet is framed for a crime and the situation seems to imply the worst, it's up to Clank to clear his friend's name. He transforms into a double-o wannabe to uncover the truth behind the crime. Unsurprisingly, the ubiquitous Captain Qwark follows close behind.

Unlike his long-eared, gun-toting buddy, Clank specializes in up-close melee combat. For example, during a rooftop level where Clank has to navigate through a tangle of ninjas, he'll rely on kicks, punches, and gadgets to get past the crowd. His weapons include a boomerang bow tie, a lapel carnation that becomes an enemy-devouring plant, jet pack boots, cuff link bombs, and more.

When it comes to stealth-based gameplay, instead of manually ducking, shimmying, and performing other death-defying acrobatics, you'll be playing the type of timing-based mini-game that's become so popular in the post-*Dance Dance Revolution* gaming world. When a marker passes a spot on the screen, you'll have to tap the corresponding button in time. Hit enough of them perfectly, and you'll see Clank weaving his way through the area. Miss too many and you'll have to restart.

We also discovered that, for some fights, Clank will take a back seat to Captain Qwark, who fights without Clank's handy arsenal (supposedly we'll find out why closer to release).

With a protagonist as personable as Clank (and with High Impact Games in charge), *Secret Agent Clank* is almost guaranteed to be a winner. We'll keep you posted with more. Teresa Dun



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PSP
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TEEN
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At long last the Belmont family's quest to destroy Dracula is here for the PSP. This time it's a double curse featuring *Symphony of the Night* and the first ever U.S. release of *Rondo of Blood*. *The Dracula X Chronicles* will let you drink up new game modes, items and enemies in gruesome 2D or blood-curdling 3D graphics.

TEEN
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Blood and Gore
Mild Suggestive Themes
Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

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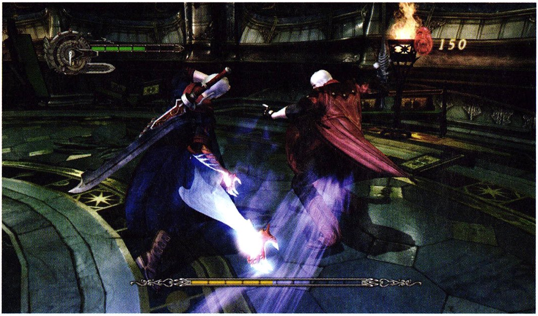
PlayStation Gallery

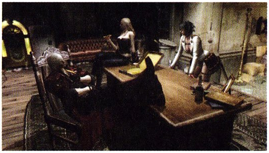
Updates, sneak peeks, work-in-progress

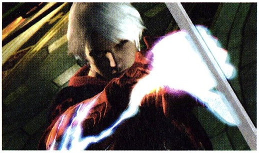
Devil May Cry 4

PS3 AVAILABLE: Spring 2008 GENRE: Action
PUBLISHER: Capcom DEVELOPER: Capcom

Although Capcom is keeping most of the key plot details of *Devil May Cry 4* extremely close to its vest, the latest round of screens from the game give away some real whoppers. Specifically, we see, for the first time, Dante in the game… kicking back at his demon-hunting agency (*Devil May Cry*) with more familiar faces: Trish (from *DMC*) and Lady (from *DMC3*). Set between *DMC* and *DMC2*, the game stars newcomer Nero, but the latest trailer released by Capcom prominently features Dante as a playable character. We can only hope the "four" in the title translates into playable characters three and four, namely Trish and Lady. RN



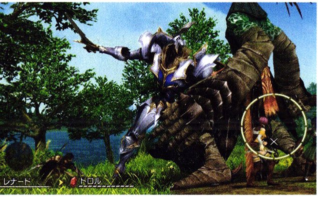


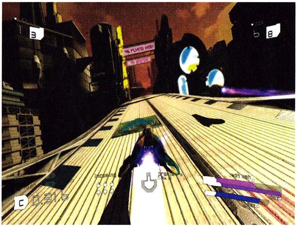


White Knight Story

PS3 AVAILABLE: TBA 2008 GENRE: RPG
PUBLISHER: Sony DEVELOPER: Level 5

The creators of *Rogue Galaxy* are back, and this time they're aiming to impress with a gorgeous RPG for the PS3. From what we've seen so far, combat will be chain-based. You'll set up "palettes" of melee and magic attacks before battle and execute them in logical succession to perform lethal combos on creatures that are literally larger than life (on the scale of *Shadow of the Colossus*). Sadly, we're looking at a distant 2008 release, but we already can't wait! TD





Wipeout HD

PS3 AVAILABLE: TBA 2008 GENRE: Racing
PUBLISHER: Sony DEVELOPER: SCE Studios Liverpool

Anyone who's seen the movie *Hackers* will remember a scene where the characters take each other on in a racing game similar to *Wipeout*. However, the actual *Wipeout* for PS one never even came close to the pre-rendered graphics seen in the movie. With *Wipeout HD*, however, Sony is finally looking to deliver us that game, in full 1080p HD no less. The game has an incredible sense of speed that almost makes the gorgeous visuals go to waste. It's set to be a PlayStation Store download with limited tracks, but with multiple difficulty levels and eight-player online competition. Think of it as a taste of what's to come from the next full-fledged *Wipeout* for PS3, currently in development at SCE Studios Liverpool. TH

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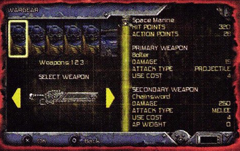

Space Marine
HIT POINTS 320
ACTION POINTS 28

PRIMARY WEAPON
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DAMAGE 15
ATTACK TYPE PROJECTILE
USE COST 4

SECONDARY WEAPON
Chainsword
DAMAGE 250
ATTACK TYPE MELEE
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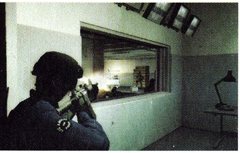
PlayStation Gallery

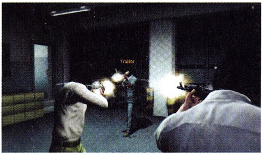
Kane & Lynch:

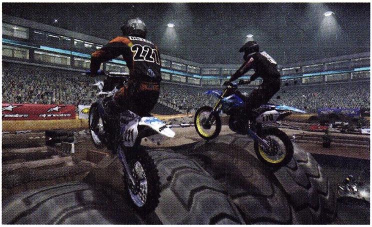
Dead Men

PS3 AVAILABLE: November 20, 2007 GENRE: Action
PUBLISHER: Eidos DEVELOPER: IO Interactive

Instead of falling into the standard categories of "co-op" or "versus," *Kane & Lynch*'s online multiplayer mode, Fragile Alliance, is a little of both. You and seven others cooperate on a heist (a bank robbery, for example), gathering cash, and defending yourselves from A.I.-controlled cops. Ultimately, however, only one person can emerge victorious, so you must inevitably turn on your cohorts and collect the loot from their carcasses. Be warned: everyone will become aware that you're the traitor and will start gunning for you, but if you die, you'll respawn as a cop, so you can get some revenge and take the cash for safekeeping. RN







MX Vs. ATV Untamed

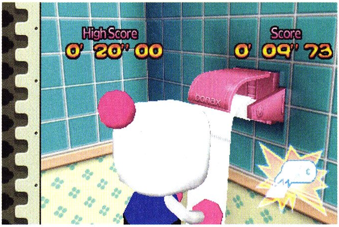
PS3 AVAILABLE: December GENRE: Racing
PUBLISHER: THQ DEVELOPER: Rainbow Studios

Is there anything as exhilarating as hopping on an MX bike or an ATV and flying off jumps at high speeds? Having not done it for real, we can't be sure, but we sure do love doing it in videogames. The latest installment of THQ's *MX Vs. ATV* series will be gracing every Sony system later this year, with more vehicles and game modes than ever. Each version has system-specific features, such as trick sets, and all feature online play. TH

Bomberman Land

PSP AVAILABLE: January 2008 GENRE: Action
PUBLISHER: Hudson Entertainment DEVELOPER: Hudson Soft

Hudson Soft returns to the PSP with more classic *Bomberman* action and lots of mini-games. There's a mini-game here for just about every type of gamer: shooter fans, sports fans, and racing fans should all find something to love. The games are part of the single-player storyline centered on repairing Bomberman Land. Of course, the original *Bomberman* Battle game is included, with 47 stages and five different battle modes. You can also play head-to-head with up to three other players via Ad hoc mode using just one UMD. BD



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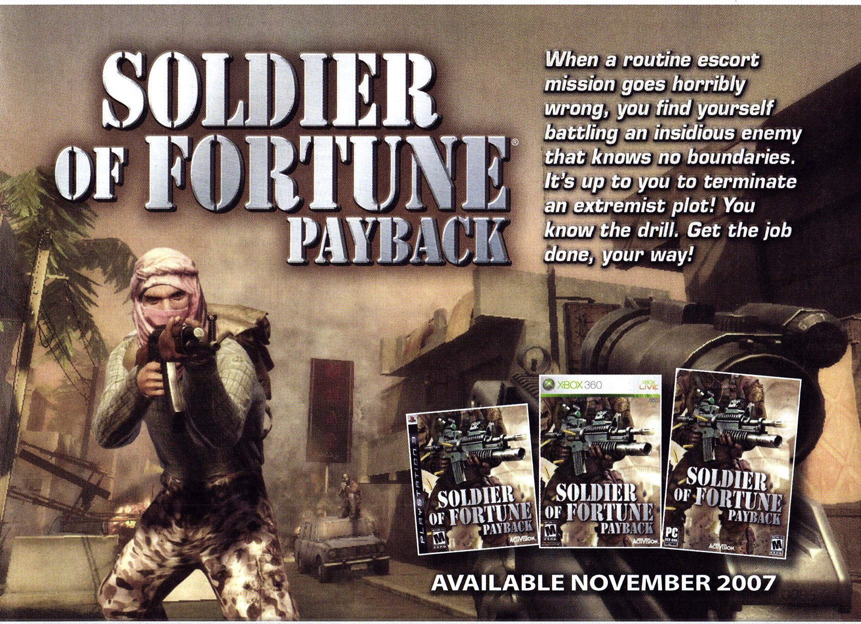

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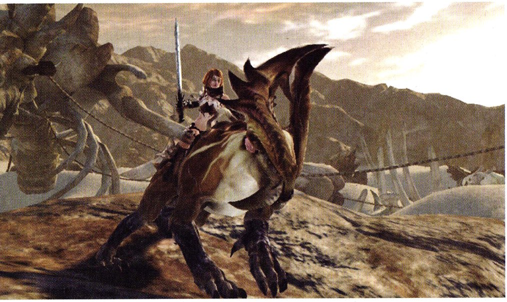
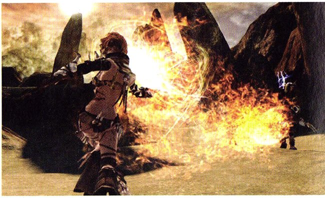
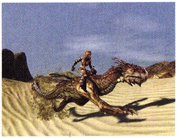


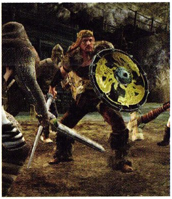
Golden Axe:
Beast Riders

PS3 AVAILABLE: Spring 2008 GENRE: Action
PUBLISHER: Sega DEVELOPER: Secret Level

Sega continues its resurrection of classic titles for new generation hardware with a nearly complete re-working of its 1989 arcade fantasy hack-'n'-slasher. *Beast Riders*, as its title implies, places a heavy focus on using variously-sized creatures as mounts, all unleashing their own attacks. You control Tyris Flare in this prequel, a female protagonist with fire-based spells at her disposal. Parrying and reversing enemy attacks is crucial, as is breaking off enemies' armor in order to land a lethal blow. This certainly isn't *Golden Axe* as we remember it, but there is already enough fan service, including plenty of familiar locales and characters, to keep fans of the original game happy while appealing to the third-person action crowd. RN



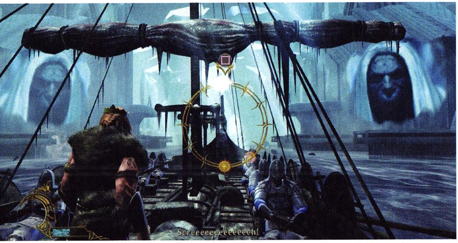


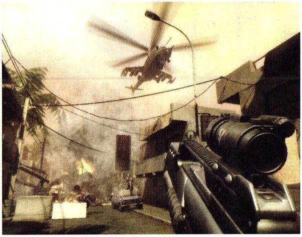


Beowulf

PS3 AVAILABLE: November 13 GENRE: Action
PUBLISHER: Ubisoft,DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Shanghai

Our interest piqued by snippets of info we've uncovered on *Beowulf*, we were eager to get our hands on the game. Now that we've tried the combat system, we have to say that it's looking impressive. To put it in a convenient perspective, it feels a lot like *God of War*, which is hardly a bad thing. The combo system is fluid and easy to use, allowing you to do some major damage with simple button combinations. Blood and gore abound, which makes the combat feel especially brutal. All in all, this little taste has only made us hungrier for more. TH

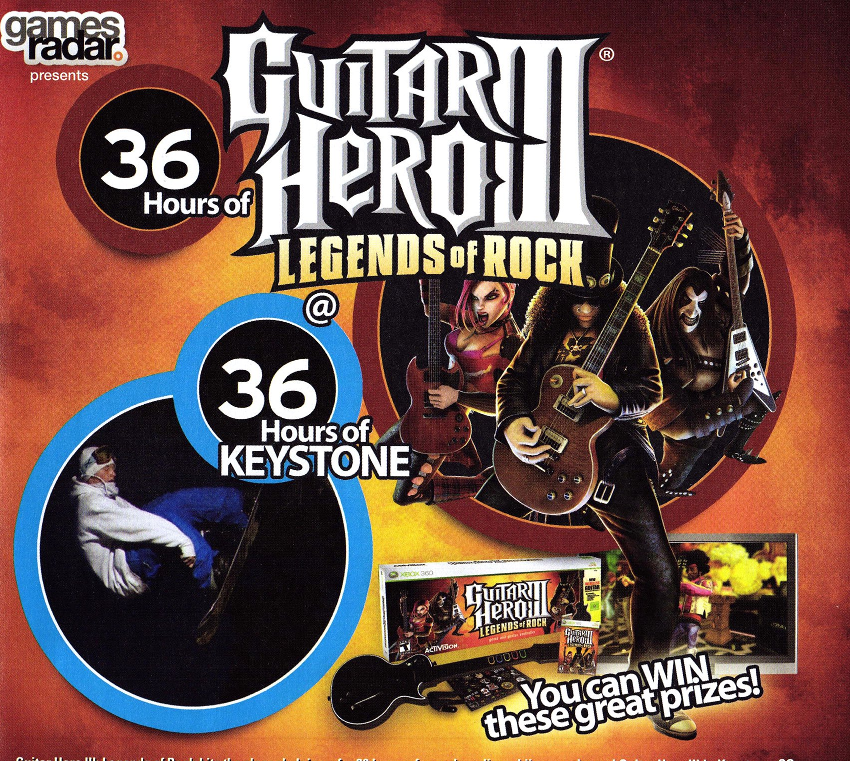




Soldier of Fortune Payback

PS3 AVAILABLE: November GENRE: First-Person Shooter
PUBLISHER: Activision DEVELOPER: Cauldron

The popular PC first-person shooter franchise storms PS3 in time for the holidays, bringing its signature massive environment destruction and realistic weapon damage effects for the ride. Developer Cauldron is working to take the experience beyond your typical military shooter, casting players as mercenaries and equipping them with bleeding-edge weaponry that will generate hyper-realistic reactions from enemies on the receiving end. Targeting of specific body parts and nailing lethal hits will be key, but utilizing the environment to your advantage will also have its rewards, both visually and for affecting the battle. *SoFP* hits soon with PlayStation Network multiplayer support. RN



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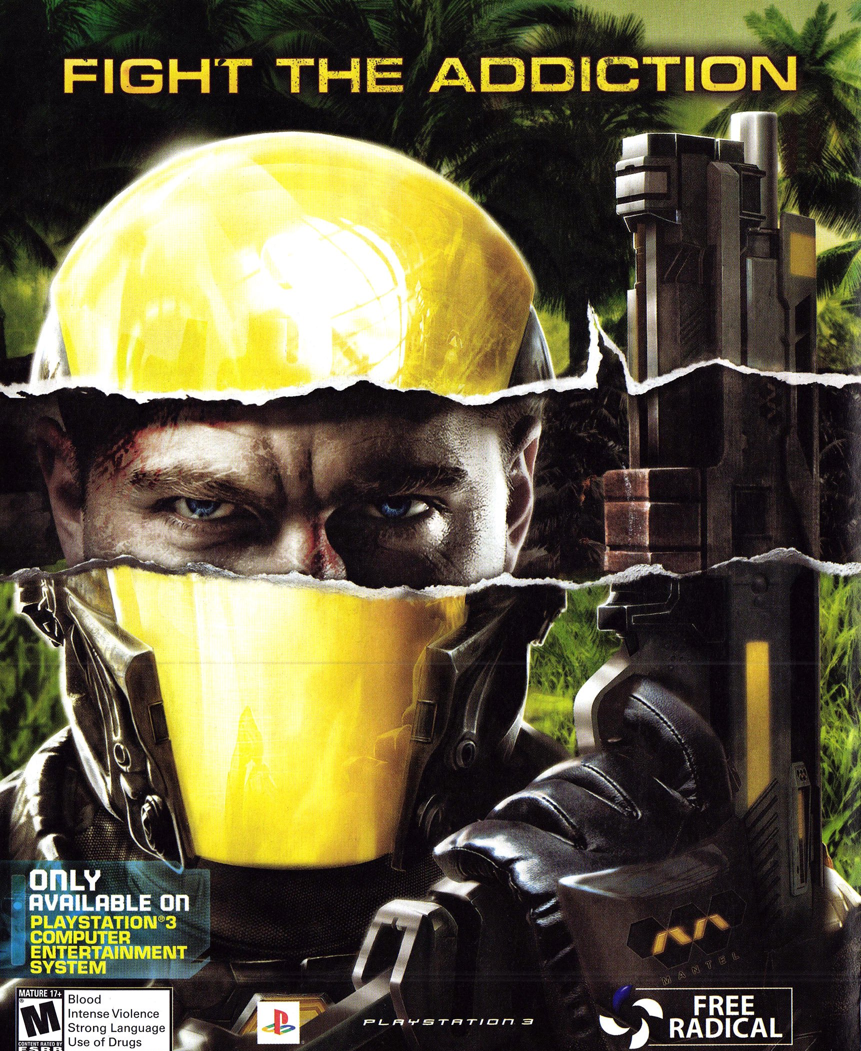
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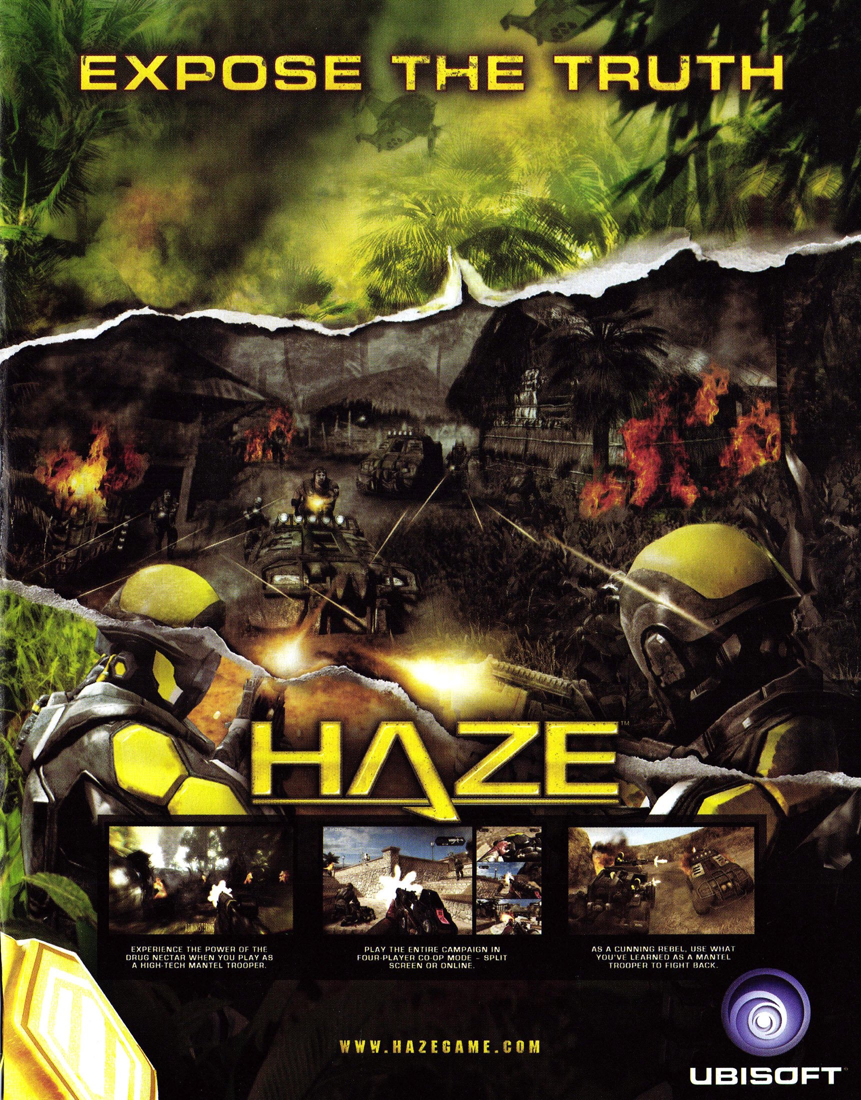

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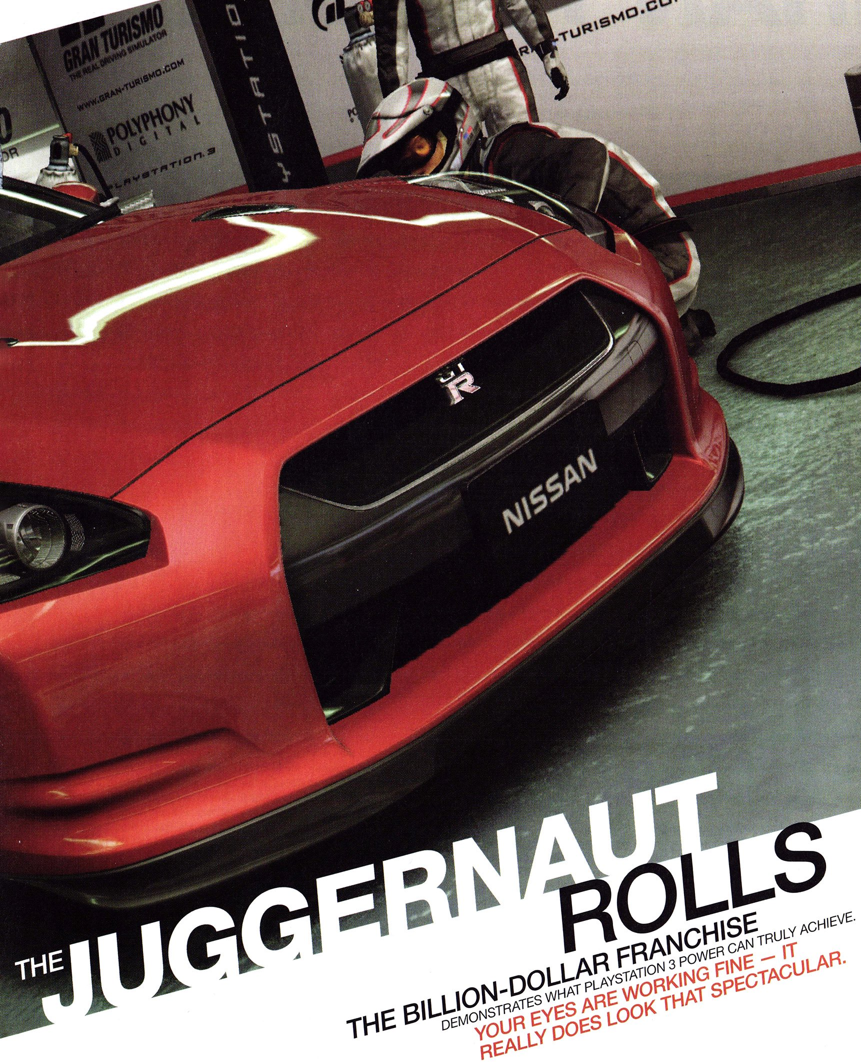
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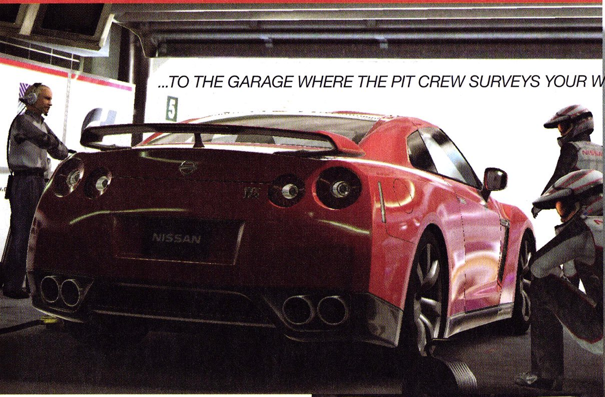
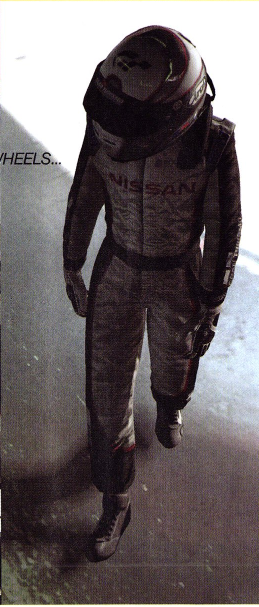
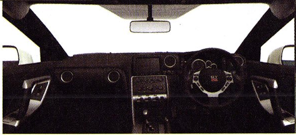


...TO THE GARAGE WHERE THE PIT CREW SURVEYS YOUR WHEELS...



The pit crews are animated with such incredible fidelity you'll think you're watching TV.



...TO STRAPPING INTO THE DRIVER'S SEAT, PREPARING FOR THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE.

As franchise system-sellers go, *Gran Turismo* is possibly PlayStation's heaviest hitter. From the original system through PS2, each game has sold millions and millions of copies (over 47 million, in fact), helped sell consoles, and pushed the available technology to its limits. The table is set for *GT5* to do exactly the same, with the much vaunted and anticipated addition of going online. Through PlayStation Network, we've already been able to check out some *Gran Turismo HD*, and right at press time a one-track demo of *GT5 Prologue* went live in Japan, much to the merriment of the rabid fan base.

So you may have already seen some of the promise coursing through every bit and byte, but we went inside celebrated development studio Polyphony Digital and got more details from Kazunori Yamauchi, president and creator of what's been termed the billion-dollar franchise. That value to Sony and the PlayStation platform has afforded the development team a large, well-appointed office space, complete with its own en suite "hotel" rooms for those crunch time all-nighters. In fact, we spotted several inflatable beds propped in cubes, illustrating the volume of work required as the game heads towards its conclusion.

Much of the work has been performed under strict security and secrecy, in large part due to an unprecedented level of involvement with car maker Nissan. Unveiled at the Tokyo Motor Show right as this issue was on the printing presses was the brand new Nissan supercar, the GT-R. The *Prologue* demo hinted at its look with a masked version that could be driven, but for *GT5*, Polyphony Digital has worked hand-in-hand with the car manufacturer way beyond getting technical information for game production.

Yamauchi revealed to us that the relationship with Nissan went back to 1998, but the desire on both sides here was to partner much more tightly than just putting the car in the game. Engineering teams from Polyphony and Nissan exchanged technology and production ideas to enable an incredibly accurate simulation for *GT5*, and also bring the developer's talents to the in-car experience. Switch on the engine of the Nissan GT-R (as if that might ever happen, so you'll have to take our word for it!) and the on-board computer comes to life with a Polyphony Digital logo on the launch screen. That's a cosmetic feature of a deep relationship that allowed Nissan to get accurate lap times for the car's performance around test tracks like Nurburgring and Laguna Seca as they were simulated in the game.

Gran Turismo: This Italian phrase means "Grand Tour" and refers to the European adventures the gentry undertook around the countries of Europe in a romanticized age of investigation and derring-do.

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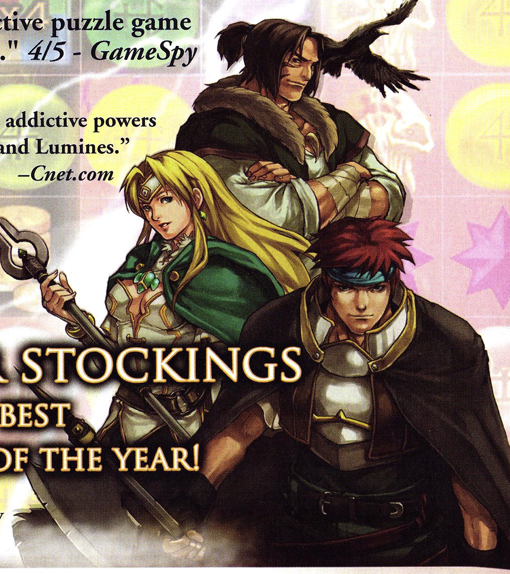

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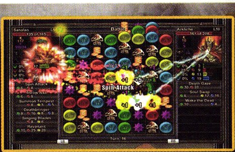
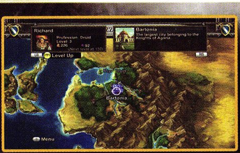

Battle
Spin Attack


Richard
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Level: 3
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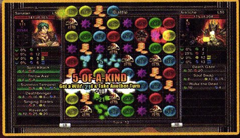
Level Up
Bartonia
Menu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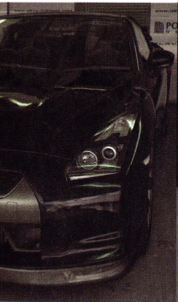
RAN TURISMO 5

The in-car dashboard view is modeled to an incredible amount of detail.



For car fanatics, spending time in the garage, viewing your rides from every angle will be nearly as much fun as taking them to the track.

PROLOGUE

After the demos, first out of the gate will be *Gran Turismo 5 Prologue*. It will feature over 40 cars from manufacturers such as Nissan, Lotus, Ferrari, and Mitsubishi. Quite frankly, you have probably never seen cars look this sweet. Seriously, the attention to detail in every curve, the polygons in virtually invisible in-wheel brake systems, the glistening paint jobs of the bodywork, are all simply spectacular. Similarly the race tracks are incredibly detailed (five will be available in *Prologue*, including London, Suzuka, and Eiger Nordwand). You'll be able to see that detail up close for yourself with a photo mode that lets you check out replays and take a snapshot of the coolest moments, including zooming in on a scene and adding effects like motion blur.

The huge addition for *Prologue* is online multiplayer that will support up to 16 racers, running at a blistering 60 frames per second in full 1080p. For Yamauchi, this represented the most monumental change to the development process. Though his team is double the size of the one that completed *Gran Turismo 4*, "the workload is quadrupled," he adds, chuckling through the smoke from his Pianissimo cigarette. "From *GT* to *GT4* the program code was very optimized and durable, it was a well-designed engine, and was delivered well," says Yamauchi. However, the *GT5* project is all new code, built from the ground up. Where Yamauchi had some involvement in the actual hardware design concepts on the previous PlayStations (he has been with the company since the beginning of PlayStation), he told us that he had virtually no input to PlayStation 3.

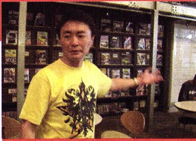
So he asked himself "What is PlayStation 3?" and identified three elements to consider in the design of *GT5*.

- It's a high performance computing machine compatible with an online network (hence the new game must have online multiplayer).

While the Nissan GT-R gets all the headlines, *GT5* Prologue will still have a staggering number of cars to drive.

> “ THE HUGE ADDITION FOR PROLOGUE IS ONLINE MULTIPLAYER THAT WILL SUPPORT UP TO 16 RACERS, RUNNING AT A BLISTERING 60FPS. ”

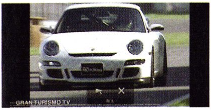
PDI head Kazanori Yamauchi uses the studio's chilled server room to store his roughly 800 bottle collection of fine wines.



Kazunori Yamauchi (right) shows us around Polyphony's relax and play room.

GTTV will be a car fanatic's dream repository of racing videos.

Replays will be played back in 1080p at 30 frames per second.



If you just have to know how cool you look driving that Porsche, then check yourself out from any angle!

- It's already connected to a TV, so nobody would be hesitant to connect the device to a TV.
- It needs to provide owners with a high level of visual detail because the collective setup in many homes is very suitable for high resolution video content.

These factors have also resulted in the creation of *Gran Turismo* TV. Car fanatics will have their fill of high definition video shows that incorporate actual *GT5* game footage alongside the potential to partner with popular shows like *Top Gear*. GTTV will have its own store front, and be a clearing house of car videos, and given the massive volume of models, books, and research material strewn around the Polyphony office, there's no shortage of information to mine for additional content. Users will also be able to create their own MyPage spaces of content, housing your snapshots, favorite car profiles, etc. for sharing with the entire *GT* online community.

GRAN TURISMO 5

The development of *Prologue* is a lead-in to the ultimate release of *GT5*, about which very little hard information has been revealed. Yamauchi was very candid about the impact of introducing the online features, aside from the creation of client and server software Polyphony has had to deal with what he describes as "a new era of servicing… and we need to generate new relationships to fulfill those services." So *Gran Turismo* development is "not just about the race experience, it means more work," he adds. What will be different from *GT5 Prologue* to the finished product, Yamauchi describes as "volume and scale — *Prologue* is smaller compared to *GT5* — but we're taking advantage of the time to use *Prologue* as the test bed for future potential features to see if they are functional or visually effective."

Inside Polyphony Digital

What kind of facilities can a studio command when it's home to a billion-dollar franchise? Polyphony Digital has seen many magazine crews pass through its heavy sealed doors, and into its chain-fenced inner sanctum. The space required to house a team the size now needed to produce the most bleeding-edge PlayStation 3 technology is significantly larger than what was needed back in the early days. Four-star "hotel" rooms, complete with shower facilities provide a place to grab a nap during the long hours. A traditionally-decorated brainstorm room ensures that a strong part of the Japanese culture is reinforced amid a game development environment that is now global. And the temperature-controlled server room is home to one of the most advanced server architectures in Japan (to the point it's used by other companies to test network issues). It's also the storage room for Yamauchi's cases of fine wine from around the world, including those from such well known (and expensive) California vineyards as Opus One.

So real looking, you'll probably get a speeding ticket!

> "PROLOGUE *IS THE TEST BED FOR FUTURE POTENTIAL RELEASES TO SEE IF THEY ARE VISUALLY EFFECTIVE.*"

Yamauchi's favorite car from previous *GT* games is the Bentley 8-speed.

Yamauchi's favorite wine varietal is Oregon Pinot Noir.

Seriously, these are not photographs. This is in-game racing.

BRIDGESTONE
SUZUKA CIRCUIT
NISSAN

The Suzuka Circuit has been seen so far, but *Prologue* will introduce Daytona to the roster of world famous tracks.

> “FOR THE TRACKS, WE CAN EXCLUSIVELY REVEAL THAT DAYTONA WILL BE FEATURED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN GT5.”

Models from all the major car manufacturers that you expect in a *Gran Turismo* game will be represented in *GT5*.

GRAN FINALE

Actual car counts are only rumors at this point, though some of those rumors point to *GT5* having over 900 different cars available. Of course, racing with a DualShock 3 will also add significantly to the experience (though any PS3 racing wheel will enhance the experience that much further). For the tracks, we can exclusively reveal that Daytona will be featured for the first time in *GT5*. If that's not enough, there's also a certain track in the Midwest that's intimately associated with the racing culture… yes, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Road Course used by the Formula One races will be a part of *GT5*.

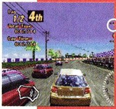
“*Gran Turismo 5* will completely focus on the car experience,” Yamauchi told us, “with the exception of Formula One, which is global, all other race interests are local [NASCAR in the U.S., rally racing in Europe, etc.], so we need content that is local.” That means you should expect plenty of additional video content on the shipping game disc. “It's a win-win situation for content,” explains Yamauchi, “the nature [of the car fanatic gamer] means that this content will appeal to the audience.”

Gran Turismo is a staggering franchise, helping shape car culture among its fans, and even selling cars that are featured in the game. According to Yamauchi, car manufacturers credit Polyphony's inclusion of the Subaru WRX and Mitsubishi Lancer in *GT* games as a significant factor in pushing sales of those cars in North America. It's come a long way since Yamauchi's first racing game, called *Motor Toon Grand Prix*. Did he envision the potential that *GT5* could deliver back in those early days? “Absolutely not,” Yamauchi says, “game creators always have the vision and realize that changes will occur in the industry, but I have to accept hardware limitations, making the product more compact, more “cheap” compared to the vision.” He adds that he's “never satisfied with the output, but now much, much closer to the true vision of what the franchise could be.” Is that *GT6*? “Ha, ha, yes, I suppose so…” ROB SMITH

On the streets of Tokyo, Yamauchi drives a super-modified Nissan 350Z

PlayStation ♥ Gran Turismo

GRAN TURISMO, like *Mario* on Nintendo platforms or *Halo* on Xbox, has been a system seller and talismanic franchise for PlayStation. The original *Gran Turismo* was the biggest-selling game on the original platform, putting Polyphony Digital on the development map on the back of its 10 million-plus unit sales.

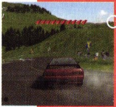


GRAN TURISMO 2 eclipsed other significant PlayStation releases like *Tomb Raider* and *Metal Gear Solid*, and even got a brief turn as the game of choice in the tuner racing movie *The Fast and the Furious*.

GRAN TURISMO 3 The first outing on PlayStation 2 was *Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec*. A massive critical and commercial success, it stands as one of the most highly-rated games ever on the platform.

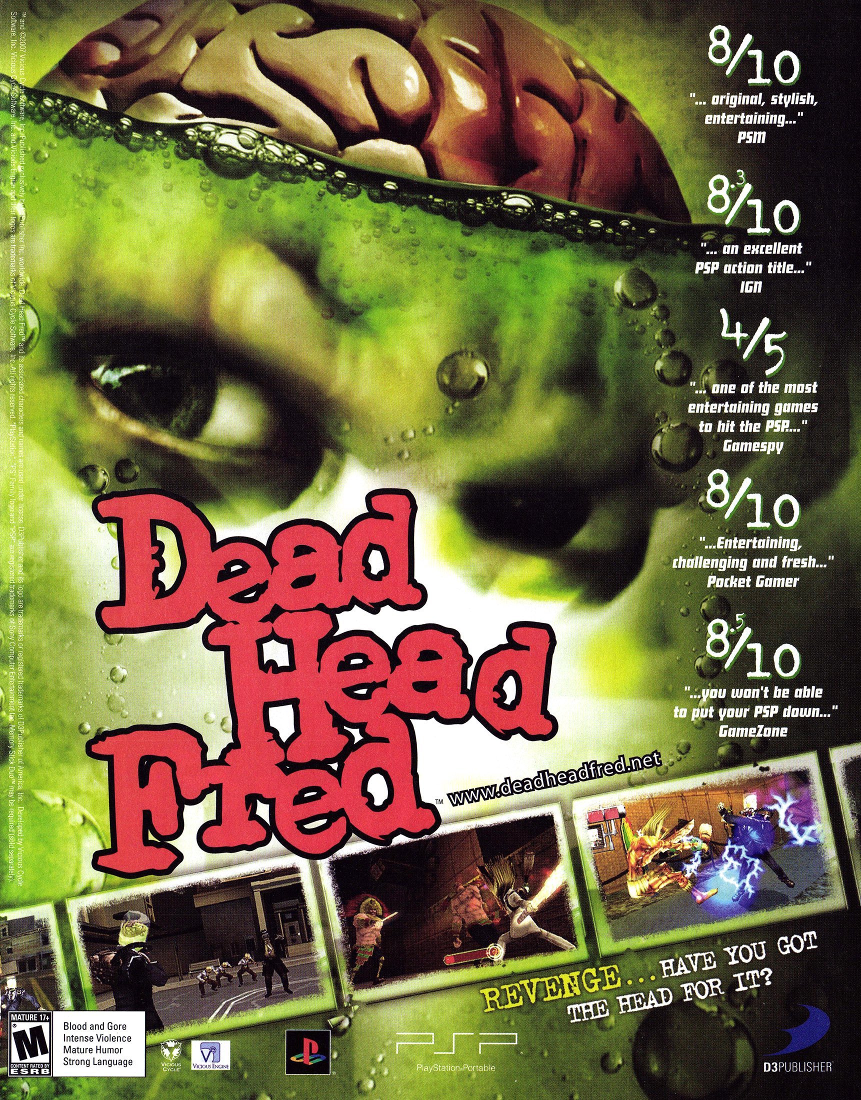
GRAN TURISMO 4 PROLOGUE Developer Polyphony Digital trotted out the Prologue concept for *Gran Turismo 4* on PlayStation 2, testing tracks and functionality, as well as providing a playable product to satiate the intense demands of the *GT* fan base. It also provided the basis for demo versions produced as promotions for cars featured in the game.

GRAN TURISMO 4 eventually shipped with over 700 incredibly-detailed cars and over 50 tracks to throw them around. It didn't, however, ship with the anticipated online option, so we've had to wait until PlayStation 3 to race *GT* online.



GRAN TURISMO HD CONCEPT was made available on PlayStation Store as another beta test for performance on the new PlayStation 3. Since online play is not an option, but an absolute requirement, significant extra development has been required to ensure that the signature visual quality and vehicle quantity is matched by the online gameplay.

Now we get *Gran Turismo 5 Prologue* in anticipation of the full deal landing in 2008.



8/10

"... original, stylish, entertaining..."
PSM

8.3/10

"... an excellent PSP action title..."
IGN

4/5

"... one of the most entertaining games to hit the PSP...."
Gamespy

8/10

"...Entertaining, challenging and fresh..."
Pocket Gamer

8.5/10

"...you won't be able to put your PSP down..."
GameZone

Dead Head Fred™

www.deadheadfred.net

REVENGE... HAVE YOU GOT THE HEAD FOR IT?

MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Mature Humor
Strong Language

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BEOWULF™
The Game
AVAILABLE NOW
MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Partial Nudity
Sexual Themes
PC
DVD-ROM
SOFTWARE
XBOX 360®

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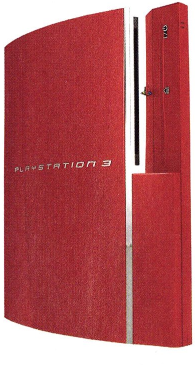
LEAD YOUR MEN into battle and become a Hero King.

PLAYBEOWULF.COM
BEOWULFMOVIE.COM

UBISOFT

Holiday Buyer's Guide



The holidays are rolling around again, which means it's time to spoil the gamers in your life. You could go the double card route — a generic gift card attached to a holiday card — but nothing screams "rush job" more than a gift certificate to the local electronics emporium. To help you out, we've scrounged up the best gamer gifts for the season. So whether you're a parent aimlessly meandering through a sea of names that make no sense, or a hardcore gamer looking for that special indulgence for yourself, you're sure to find the exact perfect choice in these next few pages.

We've listed the retail price on most items. You can find them cheaper if you shop around! Amazon, for example, will often have sales. You'll also find deals on shipping if you purchase in bulk.

PS3 & PERIPHERALS

ColorWare's Painted PS3

PRICE: $725
www.colorwarepc.com/

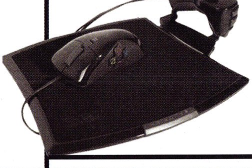
Why buy a normal 80GB PS3 when you can get the same system but with color. Choose from over a dozen paints to customize a brand new PS3 (or send in your own for $99).

A.L.S. PS3 Game System Case

PRICE: $49.99
www.amazon.com

Anyone who has ever tried to lug around a PS3 by hand knows that a strong carrying case is absolutely necessary. Our favorite is this PS3 Game System case by A.L.S. because of its convenient shoulder strap, sturdy build, and extra space for games and controllers.

PLAYSTATION 3
PLAYSTATION 3



FragFX

PRICE: $59.99
www.splitfish.com

Know someone who loves first person shooters on PC, but fumbles when they try to play them using a PlayStation 3 Sixaxis controller? The FragFX will let them use their mouse-aiming skills on the PS3. Works with any and all PS3 games.

Sony PSP Star Wars Battlefront Renegade Squadron Entertainment Pack - Ceramic White

PRICE: $199.99
www.amazon.com

The new, lightweight PSP slim with an awesome Darth Vader silkscreen on the back of the system and the *Star Wars Battlefront Renegade Squadron* PSP game.

Sony's PSP Travel Case

PRICE: $19.99
www.amazon.com

A sturdy case so you can play on the go.

Sony MDR-EX71SLA Fontopia Bud-Style Headphones with Case

PRICE: $54.56
www.amazon.com

A quality pair of headphones is essential for a portable system like the PSP. We love this pair because it offers excellent sound (just listen to the bass!) for a decent price.

Sony's PSP Pouch and Wrist Strap

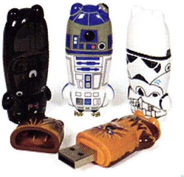
PRICE: $19.99
www.amazon.com

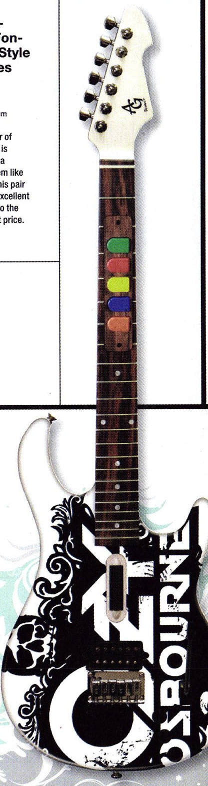
Hate scratches and marks on your PSP? This PSP Pouch will keep your system safe when you toss it in your bag or stuff it in your pocket.

Star Wars Mimobots

PRICE: $69.95
www.firebox.com

These 1GB memory sticks (choose from R2-D2, Stormtrooper, Darth Vader, and Chewbacca models) are perfect for *Star Wars* fans who want to store their saved games in style. Better yet, these devices come preloaded with exclusive *Star Wars* content (like wallpapers, sound bites, videos, and avatars)!





ArtGuitar Guitar Hero Guitar

PRICE: Expect to plop down a couple grand
www.artguitar.com

For a gorgeous, absolutely customized paint job, you'll want to hire the craftsmen at ArtGuitar to beautify your *Guitar Hero* guitar. Or rather, you'll want to buy a completely new one from them. (They don't paint already owned instruments for liability reasons.) It's pricey and it takes a while, but hey, it's art.

Sony 4GB Memory Stick PRO DUO

PRICE: $72.99
www.amazon.com

If you have too many saved games clogging up your PSP, this sweet 4GB memory card should have ample room for all your needs.

TELEVISIONS & CABLES

In case you haven't noticed, the world has gone high def. If you're just now hopping on that bandwagon (or giving someone else a hoist), big box stores are stocked with numerous options. Here, our own tech-savvy Randy Nelson gives his top picks for the season.

Sony Bravia SXRD KDS-55A3000 55" 1080p Rear Projection HDTV

PRICE: $2,499.99
www.sonystyle.com

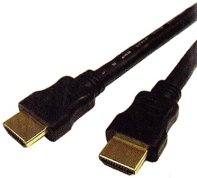
Randy says, "I own this TV and it's the best-looking 1080p set of its size for the price. It's a great value."

AQUOS
SHARP

Sharp Aquos LC42D62U 42" 1080p LCD HDTV

PRICE: $2,099.99
www.sharpusa.com/

Randy says, "Considered by many videophiles to be the best price/performance offering on the market. Quality LCD panel, rich blacks, fast response time virtually eliminates blurring or lag in games. Full 1080p. A smart purchase."



HDMI Cables

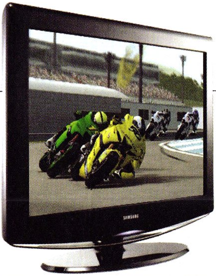
PRICE: $10-100
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High-Definition_Multimedia_Interface

For the true high def experience, you'll need a HDMI cable. Here's a secret: when it comes to HDMI cables, they either work or they don't. We recommend buying the cheapest you can find (for as low as $15 bucks for a two meter long cable).

Samsung LNT2653H 26" LCD HDTV

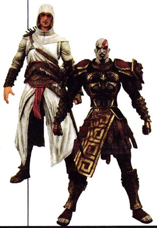
PRICE: $899.99
www.samsung.com/us/

Randy says, "Across the board, a solid performing display. Only caveats are trueness of blacks and limit of 720p resolution (unavoidable in this size and price range). Perfect for smaller spaces."



TOYS

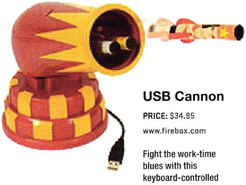
Action figures, collectable cards, and other odd knick-knacks make great gifts!



Player Select Action Figures

PRICE: $15.99 – 32.99
www.necaonline.com or www.shopafx.com/playerselect.html

With selections ranging from Lara Croft to Tomb Raider to Harry Potter, you're bound to find an attractive toy or three.



USB Cannon

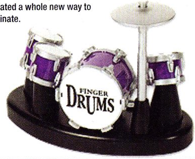
PRICE: $34.95
www.firebox.com

Fight the work-time blues with this keyboard-controlled cannon that fires circus babe ammo up to ten feet with a flick of the spacebar!

Finger Drum

PRICE: $19.95
www.firebox.com

With a snare drum, bass drum with working pedal, two tom toms, and a cymbal, the Finger Drums have created a whole new way to procrastinate.



koei
www.koei.com

Produced by Omega-Force

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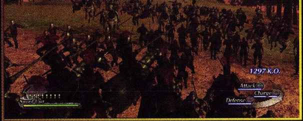

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PLAYSTATION 3

XBOX 360

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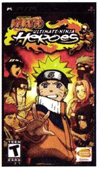
GAMES

For the quick and easy gamer gift, games are the most obvious answer. But if you're unsure what's good, or if you just want to check to make sure your collection's complete, we've compiled a list of the most popular games of the season.

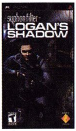
PSP



FIGHTING

Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Heroes

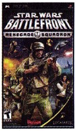
PRICE: $39.99



SHOOTER

Syphon Filter: Logan's Shadow

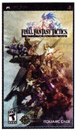
PRICE: $39.99



SHOOTER

Star Wars Battlefront: Renegade Squadron

PRICE: $39.99

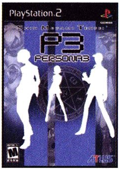


RPG

Final Fantasy Tactics

PRICE: $39.99

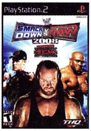
PS2



RPG

Shin Megami Tensei: Persona 3

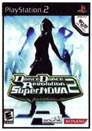
PRICE: $49.99



SPORTS

WWE SmackDown vs. RAW 2008

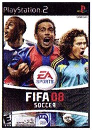
PRICE: $49.99



MUSIC

Dance Dance Revolution SuperNOVA 2

PRICE: $29.99

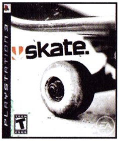


SPORTS

FIFA 08

PRICE: $39.99

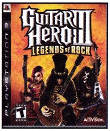
PS3



SPORTS

Skate

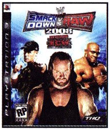
PRICE: $59.99



MUSIC

Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock

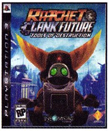
PRICE: $99.99, WITH WIRELESS GUITAR



SPORTS

WWE SmackDown vs. RAW 2008

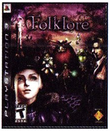
PRICE: $59.99



PLATFORMER

Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction

PRICE: $59.99



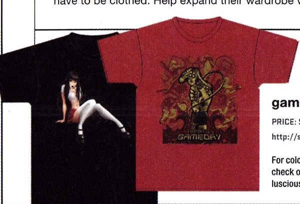
RPG

Folklore

PRICE: $59.99

T-SHIRTS

Though some gamers like to lounge around naked (so we've heard…<shudder>), most have to venture into public sooner or later. When that happens, social norms dictate that they have to be clothed. Help expand their wardrobe with a gaming T-shirt.



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http://shop.gameamp.com/

For colorful, artsy tees, check out GameAmp's luscious designs.

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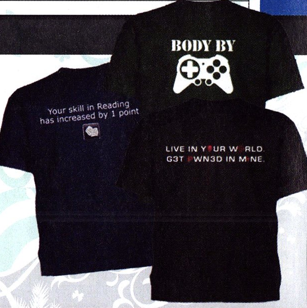
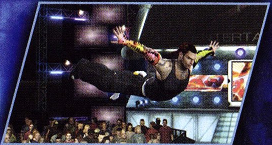
www.jinx.com

J!NX offers a huge variety of T-shirts, sweaters, and hats for men, women, and children.



THE PATH YOU TAKE TO BECOME A LEGEND IS YOUR CHOICE.



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Choose to fight as a high flyer, powerhouse, brawler, hardcore, submission artist, technical, showman or dirty fighter. All with unique moves and special abilities.

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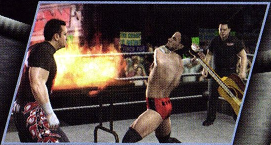
New Pressure-based system allows players to decide how much pressure to apply using the right stick.



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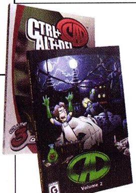
EDUCATIONAL READS

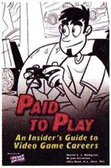
If you like giving books as presents, consider some of these great reads. If it's too late to order them, try checking your local comic book store or the manga section at some of the bigger chains.



CAD Books

Price: $10-30 EACH (SOFT AND HARDCOVER)
http://www.splitreason.com/cad-comic/

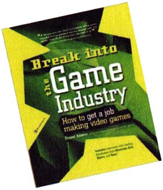
Re-live Ethan's ridiculous fanboy antics in print form with the Ctrl+Alt+Del comic books. The print versions have exclusive content not found anywhere else.



Paid to Play: An Insider's Guide to Video Game Careers

Price: $19.95
By Alice Rush, David Hodgson, and Bryan Stratton

For a more detailed look at the games industry, Paid to Play offers an inside look. The book contains interviews with over 100 industry professionals, over 50 career profiles, and an assortment of self-assessment exercises. It's an excellent resource for those serious about working in the industry.


Break into the Game Industry
How to get a job making video games

Break into the Game Industry

Price: $34.99
By Ernest Adams

To get a general idea of what the games industry is like and what kind of skills you'll need to break in, Break into the Game Industry is a great reference, especially for the high school crowd.

Penny Arcade
Attack of the Bacon Robots
The Epic Legends of the Magic Sword
The Warsun Prophecies
Birds are Weird

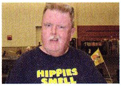
Penny Arcade's Four Book Bundle

Price: $45
http://www.pennyarcademerch.com/

Widely hailed as the most entertaining game industry commentator, Penny Arcade has been making comics since 1998. In this four-book bundle, enjoy every Penny Arcade comic from 1998 to 2003. (Books also sold individually.)

STAFF PICKS

PlayStation: The Official Magazine staff like gifts, too. As gamers we're all into whatever game goodies we can get. That doesn't mean every gift we're hoping for is game-related, though. In fact, some are, well, you'll see…



BILL

- A Barrett Model 821A in .50 caliber, but since I live in California, I'll settle for a Model 99 rifle in .416 caliber
- 2000 rounds of ammo for the Barrett
- 5 million dollars, tax-free, of course!

TERESA

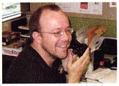
- A well-behaved, and absolutely adorable kitten, puppy, piglet, or monkey.
- An all-expenses paid two month trip to Europe (with a cruise).
- The set of Baby Murloc figurines that I should have picked up at Blizzcon, but sadly didn't.

RANDY

- Entertainment Earth *Star Wars: Elite Forces of The Republic*
- *Nightmare Before Christmas* Jack Skellington 20-inch Scale Replica
- Dream Authentics Excalibur Arcade System

TOM

- *Rock Band*
- The latest issues of my favorite Japanese mangas
- PSP *Star Wars Battlefront: Renegade Squadron* Entertainment Pack (the one with Darth Vader on it)
- *Underworld* on Blu-Ray



ROB

- Sheffield United promotion to the Premiership
- Cleveland CG1 Black Pearl golf irons
- Breitling SuperOcean Heritage watch (in blue)

KEN

- Adidas Teamgeist™ Berlin soccer ball
- iPod Touch 16GB
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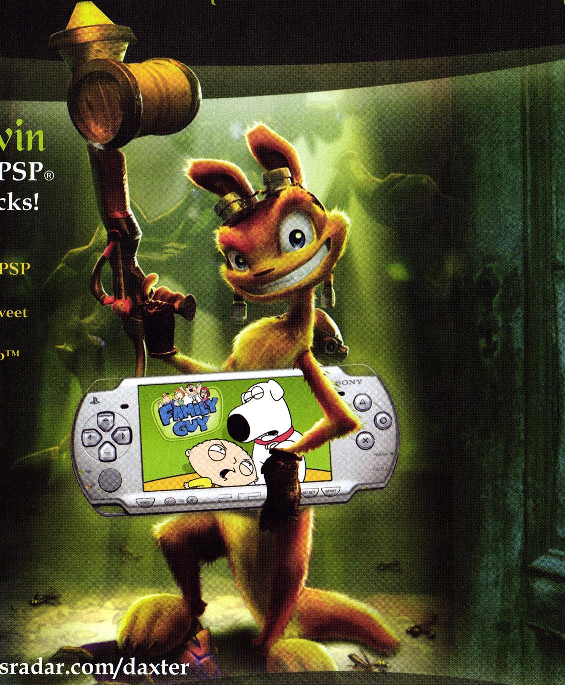

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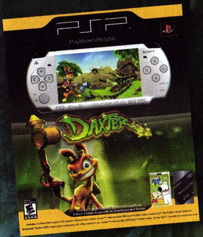

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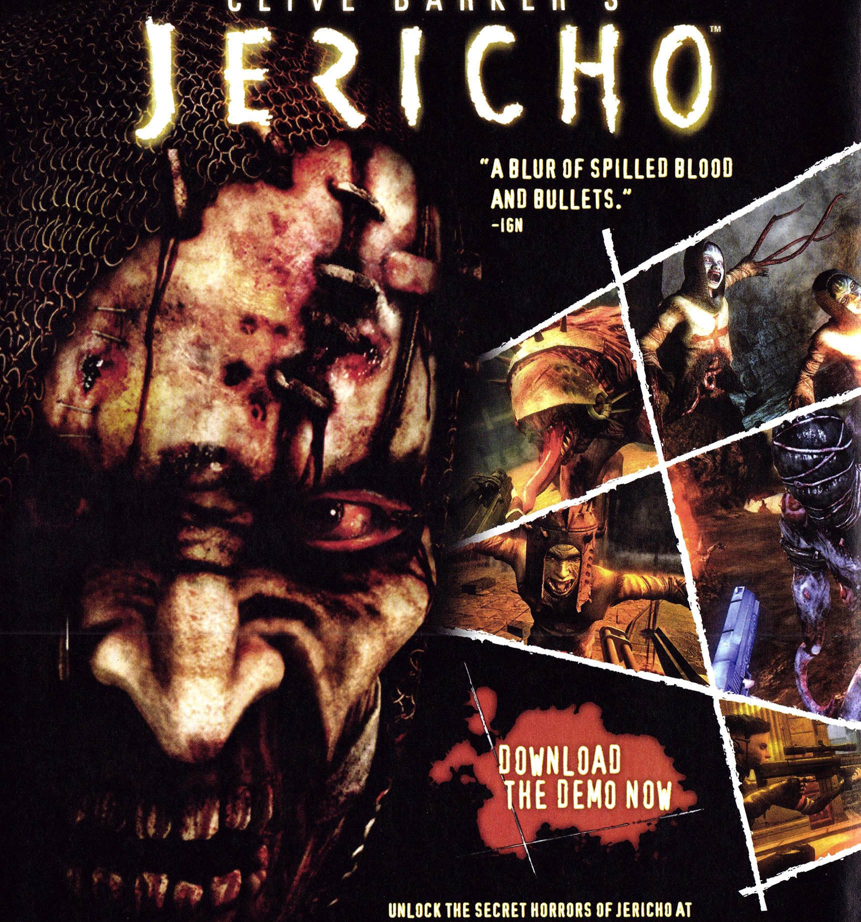
JERICHO™



"A BLUR OF SPILLED BLOOD AND BULLETS."
-IGN

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M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Sexual Themes
Strong Language

XBOX 360 LIVE

Games for Windows

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PLAYSTATION 3

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Reviews

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RATINGS

★★★★★ EXCEPTIONAL
An excellent game that takes its genre to new heights.

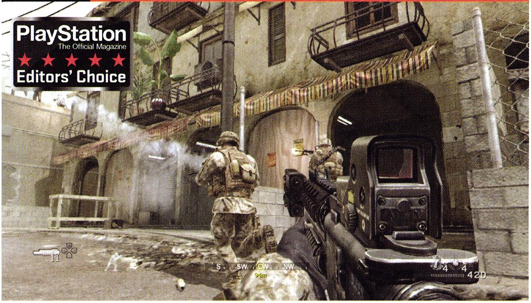
★★★★ GREAT
Not flawless, but a truly great game and among the best in its genre.

★★★ OKAY
An overall positive experience for fans of the genre or subject matter.

★★ POOR
Suffers from several major flaws that really damage the experience.

★ AWFUL
Not worth your time or money.

GAME of the month Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare p70



Meet the experts delivering your buying advice

A combined 55 years of gaming reviewing, these reviewers know the industry inside and out.

ROB SMITH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAME REVIEW: That would be *Dennis* for the Game Boy for my first on-staff job at *GB Action* magazine in England. I gave it an 8! By the way, that was in 1993. Jeez, I'm old.

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE: *FIFA 08*

NOW PLAYING: *Warhawk, Heavenly Sword*, InDesign, Word, and Excel!

BILL DONOHUE
MANAGING EDITOR

FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAME REVIEW: Gee, that was a long, long time ago. I'd guess it was probably a flight sim, just before the *Ace Combat* series started. It was called *Bogey Dead 6* and had gameplay similar to the *AC* series, but the graphics weren't as nice. I think I gave it an 8.

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE: *Clive Barker's Jericho*

NOW PLAYING: *Ratchet & Clank Future, TimeSplitters, SB2*

RANDY NELSON
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAME REVIEW: It was for a 2D, top-down PlayStation action game (read: old) by LucasArts called *Herc's Adventures.* I wrote it for Ultra Game Players magazine back in 1997, where I actually handed it in to... wait for it... Bill Donohue!

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE: *SWAT Target Liberty, Buzz! The Mega Quiz. Call of Duty 4, Manhunt 2, NFS: ProStreet*

NOW PLAYING: *LocoRoco Cocoreccho!*

TERESA DUN
ASSISTANT EDITOR

FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAME REVIEW: The first game I reviewed was *Phantasy Star Universe*. That was my first day as an intern, too! .

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE: *The Eye of Judgment, Thrillville: Off the Rails, MLB Power Pros, The Simpsons Game*

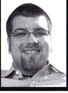
NOW PLAYING: *Final Fantasy Tactics: The War of the Lions*

CASEY LYNCH
FREELANCE WRITER

FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAME REVIEW: Gosh, I'm pretty sure the first game I reviewed professionally was *Resident Evil 2* on the PS one way back in '98.

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE: *MotoGP 07*

NOW PLAYING: *Guitar Hero II, Everyday Shooter, Star Wars Battlefront: RS*



TOM HOLOIEN
EDITORIAL INTERN

FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAME REVIEW: I did my first review as a PSM intern, too. The game was *Samurai Champloo: Sidetracked*... ever since, I've been the go-to anime guy around here.

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE: *Disgaea: Afternoon of Darkness, Dragon Ball Z Budokai Tenkaichi 3, Tony Hawk's Proving Ground, LEGO Star Wars*

NOW PLAYING: *Crisis Core: FFVII*

Retro View

The big games we were playing this month in PlayStation history.

ONE YEAR AGO...

Guitar Hero II (PS2)
(9.5 out of 10)

Splinter Cell: Double Agent (PS2)
(9.0 out of 10)

Bully (PS2)
(8.5 out of 10)

FIVE YEARS AGO...

Contra: Shattered Soldier (PS2)
(9 out of 10)

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City (PS2)
(9 out of 10)

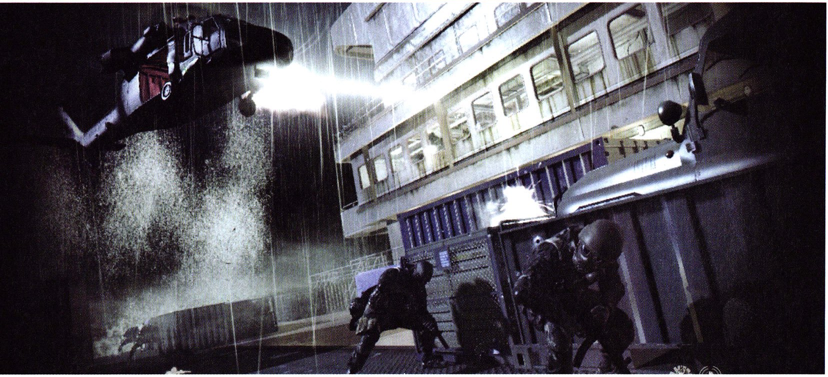
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance (PS2)
(8 out of 10)

10 YEARS AGO...

Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back (PS1)
(5 stars)

Jet Moto 2 (PS1)
(3.5 stars)

Tomb Raider 2 (PS1)
(5 stars)



This is the HH-60 variant of the Seahawk helicopter. It has a crew of four and carries eight combat troops.

Ghillie suit: Camouflage for snipers and hunters that looks like underbrush okie.

PlayStation The Official Magazine
★★★★★
Editors' Choice

PS3 | R

Call of Duty 4:

Modern Warfare

Heed the call of this modern classic

PS3 PRICE: $59.99 ESRB: Mature PUBLISHER: Activision DEVELOPER: Infinity Ward

After four years, you might think you know what to expect from *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare*. You might think it's more of the same best-selling *CoD* with a contemporary coat.

Think again.

What separates *CoD4* from its brethren is that it's painted with a vastly more dramatic narrative. In prior *CoDs*, you participated in historically inspired battles, and while they undoubtedly delivered their share of drama, they didn't convey an experience nearly as cinematic.

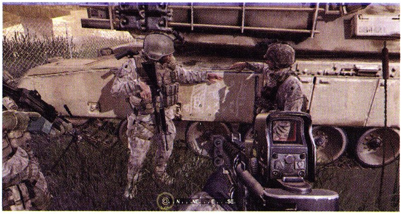
With *CoD4*, developer Infinity Ward throws you into real-world situations, but places the focus on fictional bad guys. Bad guys that, unlike Hitler, you may face off against directly. Bad guys like the Russian Imran Zakhaev and his ally, the would-be dictator Al-Asad, whose coup in the Middle East serves as a distraction from Zakhaev's real goal: the rebirth of Soviet Russia. As S.A.S. Sergeant John "Soap" MacTavish and U.S.M.C. Sergeant Paul Jackson, you take on Zakhaev and Al-Asad in Russia and the Middle East, respectively. The story is unencumbered by the boundaries of historical accuracy and provides a dramatic, military experience not unlike that of a Jerry Bruckheimer-produced blockbuster.

The cutscenes keep you totally engaged in the unfolding story by never really taking you out of the central action. You see and experience every plot turn in the first person, keeping the narrative scenes interactive and immersive. In fact, the only opportunity to grab your breath is between levels, where you're given a high-tech, *Enemy of the State*-ish sitrep.

While the bad guys may be fictional, Infinity Ward has paid special attention to making the game realistic and contemporary. It's intense and almost overwhelming as enemies swarm on your position, keeping you and your squad mates pinned down until you can fight back and incrementally progress. Just remember to stay away from "soft" cover (e.g., wood planks and drywall) because both you and your enemies can shoot through it (a useful feature when playing the multiplayer modes).

The focus, then, is on ground-based combat, but the pace and perspective is refreshed during interludes of stealth-based and vehicle-based activity. The former, in fact — a flashback involving S.A.S. Lieutenant Price, who later becomes Soap's commander — is the best mission of the game. Armed with a ghillie suit and a sniper rifle, you, as Lt. Price, and your commander must sneak behind enemy lines for

> **“Taken as a single-player experience alone, *CoD4* is a masterpiece; easily one of the best games on the PS3.”**



Most narrative scenes are interactive, so you’re always in the middle of the action.

an assassination attempt. The usual intensity level is ratcheted up several notches as you try to avoid patrols and wild dogs that could draw some unneeded attention.

As for the vehicle portions, you’re never behind the wheel at any time — unlike previous *CoDs* — but you do partake in other facets of being a modern soldier, like manning the weapons of an AC-130 flying gunship, complete with “black hot” or “white hot” thermal imaging, like a news report (in fact, one of your allies says as much).

None of it feels like a chore — in part because Infinity Ward didn’t force SIXAXIS controls into the game. Granted, we actually liked the way SIXAXIS worked in Treyarch’s *Call of Duty 3* (bump the SIXAXIS to melee attack, for example), but *CoD4* is a more streamlined experience because you don’t have to manhandle the controller.

So, taken as a single-player experience alone, *CoD4* is a masterpiece; easily one of the best games on the PS3, but that’s only half the picture. The other half is the phenomenal multiplayer that pushes the game beyond being just *one of* to being *the* best game on the PS3.

The key to the multiplayer’s success is the addictiveness imbued through its RPG-like qualities. Initially, only Deathmatch and Team Deathmatch — the staples of multiplayer — are playable. The more you play, the more Experience Points you gain, the higher rank you earn, and the more features you can unlock. Not just new multiplayer modes (like Search & Destroy, where you can only die once per round, or the more realistic Hardcore, where you don’t have a HUD and weapons deal more damage), but also new weapons and a feature called Perks. More health, faster reloads, and larger ammo capacity are a few of the Perks available; each gives you specific advantages and allows you to play the multiplayer modes as you see fit.

One of the most useful Perks is called Martyrdom, where you drop a live frag grenade after you’ve been killed, blowing up anyone who runs up to your corpse to collect your weapons and ammo (or anyone who wants to perform, for the lack of a better term, a “corpse hump”). Not only do you get some instant revenge, but it also helps you complete the grenade challenge (one of several multiplayer-only challenges), thus giving you even more XP and potentially raising your level. You’ll unlock most everything at level 55, but that’s far from the end: after level 55, you can unlock Prestige mode, where you’re kicked back to level 1, but you have a special icon next to your name showing others that you’ve already gone through all 55 levels at least once.

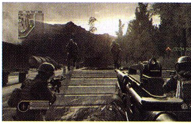
Both the single- and multiplayer modes are, taken separately, utterly outstanding. The combination of the two makes *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare* Infinity Ward’s magnum opus, and an extraordinary accomplishment in gaming. Randy Nelson

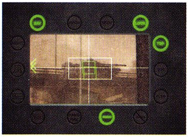
★★★★★

Music Man

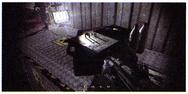
Renowned composer Harry Gregson-Williams was tapped to write the game’s main theme. With a résumé that includes films like *Enemy of the State*, as well as games like *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *3*, and *4*, Gregson-Williams is a perfect fit for a game like *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare*, and helps deliver the epic emotional range of the game’s story and situations.

To succeed at multiplayer, communicating via headset is a must.

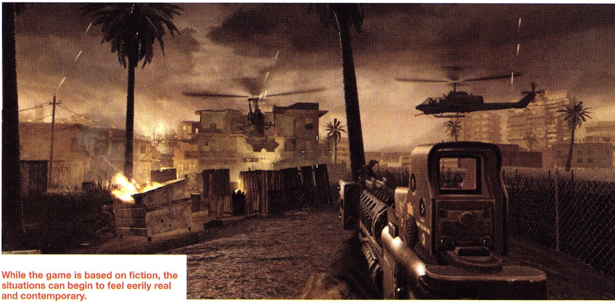




Javelins are always handy to have when facing tanks and other similar vehicles.



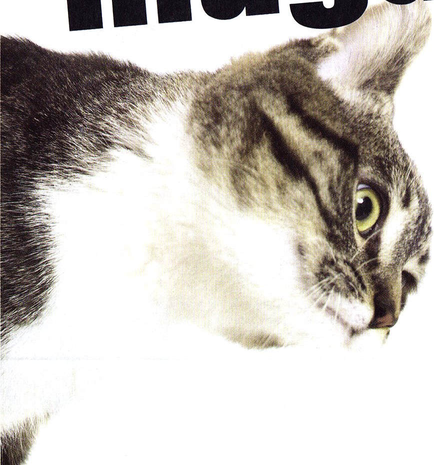
You’d be better off using a scoped rifle for this kill instead of that full-auto rig.



While the game is based on fiction, the situations can begin to feel eerily real and contemporary.

Epilogue: Stick around after the credits for a bonus level. It’s a neat extra.

im in ur magazeen



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It's strange that these three archers only do a minimal amount of damage.

The PlayStation Eye — that comes as part of this impressive package — will import characters depicted on the cards into the game.

Water creatures thrive in water environments, but suffer in fire-bound locations. Makes sense, no?

Dejarik's Origins: In the *Star Wars* universe, *Dejarik* originated as a Jedi game, though it quickly spread.

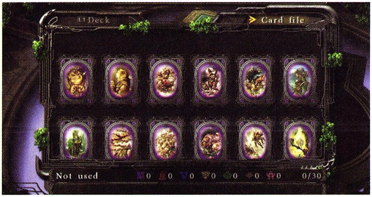
The Eye of Judgment

The great eye is ever watchful

PS3 PRICE: $69.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: SCE DEVELOPER: SCE Studios Japan

In the original *Star Wars* film, Chewbacca and R2-D2 lounge in the Millennium Falcon enjoying a game of Dejarik, the chess-like game that uses holographic monsters as game pieces. While we still don't have the technology to cost-effectively recreate that experience (the Millennium Falcon alone would cost an arm, a leg, and a couple kidneys, at the very least), Sony's new PlayStation Eye camera with the *Eye of Judgment* card game comes relatively close.

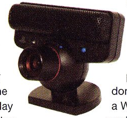
If you want to keep organized, you can scan in your deck and keep them in a digital library.



The premise is simple: You're playing a physical card game (like *Magic: The Gathering*) on a tabletop 3x3 board. The twist is that the PlayStation Eye picks up every move you make and transfers it onto the TV, bringing the flat images on your cards into colorful, three-dimensional life. Essentially, you're playing the game in two mediums at once.

The objective of the *Eye of Judgment* is straightforward—conquer the board by squatting on five of the nine squares. Gameplay revolves around drawing cards, summoning creatures, placing them on the board, and attacking, all while managing your limited mana supply. The cards tell you each monster's attack and defense range, and you place the Action Card on top of the enemy you want to target so the camera picks it up (you won't be using the SIXAXIS very much). Once you initiate combat, though, your opponent's creatures may be able to counterattack, so you'll have to think strategically.

An added complexity is the elemental system. Each square on the board has a surface and an underground elemental affinity; each creature belongs to an elemental house. If you place your minion on a corresponding element, he'll gain a health bonus, but the reverse also holds. If your opponent decides to "unearth" the hidden element on an occupied game square, your creature might lose considerable health.



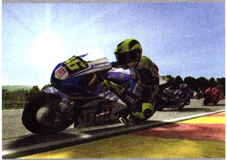
The technology works surprisingly well. Occasionally your hand will get in the way, but overall, the camera is able to "read" the cards and interpret your moves accurately. Also, while there's no single player campaign per se, don't worry if you don't have a Wookie on hand to play against. You can battle your PS3 or online opponents.

Whatever your interest and experience in trading card games, we recommend checking out *The Eye of Judgment*, if for nothing else than the novelty factor and the fantastic deal—game disc, 30 card starter deck, 5 card booster pack, game board, and the PlayStation Eye, for just 70 bucks. Teresa Dun

★★★★

So Many Motos: Before Capcom snagged the license, Namco had released four *MotoGP* games on the PS2. Its first in the series was a PS2 launch title.

MotoGP 07



A good start for this motorcycle racer with a new home

PS2 PRICE: $39.99 ESRB: Everyone 10+
PUBLISHER: LucasArts
DEVELOPER: Frontier Developments

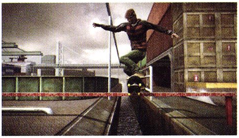
Capcom comes off like a crotch rocket vet with *MotoGP 07*, even though it's the publisher's first foray into the breakneck franchise since snagging the PS2 rights from Namco. While nothing's truly revolutionary here, *MotoGP 07* offers an entertaining grab bag of exotic motorcycle racing goodness with three different difficulty settings spanning everything from arcade-y, self-correcting fun to downright mean-controlling sim stuff. All of the licensed riders and circuits from the MotoGP 2007 season are included here, so if you're itching to gun hairpins while white-knuckling a 250cc Aprilia that's worth more than your parents' house, *MotoGP 07* is a worthwhile way to spend your two-wheeled grand prix dollars this season. Casey Lynch

★★★½

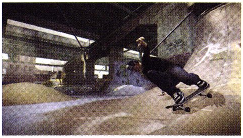
If you know your stuff, you should recognize the bikes, tracks, and riders.

The graphics are solid for a PS2 game.

Arcade Fun: If you see a *"Tony Hawk's 2000"* arcade machine, you can use it to play bonus mini-games, including a "Classic" mode.



As ever, grinding is key to racking up major points.



Three career paths allow for deeper customization.

Tony Hawk's Proving Ground

Fails to prove that Tony Hawk can keep up with the next generation

PS3 PRICE: $59.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: Activision DEVELOPER: Neversoft Entertainment

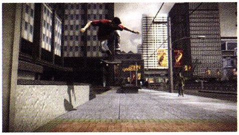
Several years and numerous iterations of *Tony Hawk* have passed, but the series' progressive innovation appears to have slowed. Sure, we now have career-type stories to follow and interaction with the pros, but the core gameplay has remained pretty much the same. The latest, *Tony Hawk's Proving Ground*, doesn't break this incremental improvement trend.

Developer Neversoft has tweaked the formula, adding three new skate "styles" (Hardcore, Career, and Rigger), each with its own special moves and stories. Progress down the Hardcore story line and you'll learn new moves to nail huge tricks and beat down anybody who gets in your way. Take the Career path and you'll learn new Nail-the-Trick modes (Nail-the-Grab and Nail-the-Manual) and make videos to get a commercial sponsorship. The Rigger path will teach you new ways to take any object and make it skateable. You progress in these storylines by talking to corresponding pro skaters and completing their challenges, and you can freely switch from one path to another to customize your character's skills accordingly.

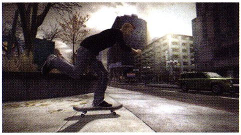
Other additions include a video editor (so you can film yourself any time you want and put your videos online for others to see), a skate lounge (where you can build your own skate park), and seamless online integration (allowing you to switch between on- and offline modes at any time).

However, the fact remains that it's still the same *Tony Hawk* experience you've played for years, with the same gameplay and similar story progression goals (score X amount of points in a minute, collect all the items, nail a specific skate line, etc.). It's all good fun, but EA's *Skate* has upped our expectations for skating games — expectations that, unfortunately, *Tony Hawk's Proving Ground* falls just short of meeting. Tom Holoien

★★★

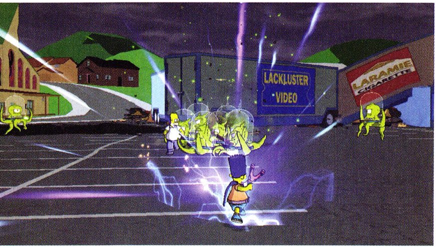


You can save replays, then edit and share them.

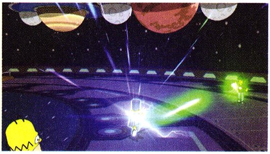


Hardcore skaters can go faster with the aggro kick.

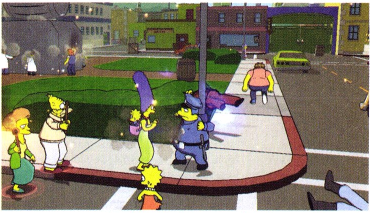
PS3 | R
PS2 | R



Combat is fairly basic and can become slightly tedious.



Hold down the circle button to charge up ranged attacks.



Almost all of the Simpsons are playable — even Maggie at certain points — but Grandpa is relegated to being an NPC.

The Simpsons Game

Best. Simpsons game. Ever.

PS3 PRICE: $59.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts DEVELOPER: EA Redwood Shores

While cynics may claim that "*The Simpsons* haven't been funny in a long time," we must protest: even today, the series has its clever moments. Fortunately, *The Simpsons Game*, a game that was clearly crafted by diehard fans of both *The Simpsons* and games in general, is overflowing with them. The combination of the witty writing and excellent voice acting from the series' vets, along with the story — a fourth wall-breaking meta-narrative of the Simpsons realizing they are in yet another *Simpsons* game — makes the game genuinely laugh-out-loud funny.

> “It's the comedic charm that makes *The Simpsons Game*, like the show it's based on, so entertaining.”

The game is, for the most part, filled with clichés, but purposely so: not only is it a game that's centered on parodying both EA and videogames in general (*Grand Theft Scratchy* being the most prominent example, as it's the game Bart wants to buy and Marge wants banned; later on, Marge and Lisa actually go into *GTS* and clean it up), but finding videogame clichés (double jumps, pressure plates, crates, power-ups, etc.) is a mini-game throughout the adventure.

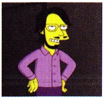
Gameplay is a tad on the simplistic side (appropriately so for casual gamers), with one button each for jumping, melee combat, ranged combat, and context-sensitive interaction. It becomes increasingly complex, though, with the addition of the Simpson clan's superpowers. Bart becomes Bartman, with the ability to glide and climb certain surfaces; Lisa has the Hand of Buddha, able to manipulate objects in the environment; Homer becomes a human ball, capable of smashing objects and/or enemies; and Marge uses her megaphone to rally Springfieldians to her cause. It's never overwhelming, and each Simpson's skill becomes integral to solving the game's many puzzles — which is, gameplay-wise, the best part of the game (the combat being the worst part; it's serviceable, but becomes repetitive). Cooperative play makes it even more fun, though it is odd that only one player can explore the Springfield hub world.

It's the story, though — a story rife with comic gold, especially with its celebrity guest cameos (including an appearance by Matt Groening himself) — that ties all the disparate levels together. Actually, it could be said that it's actually more fun to *watch* the game than it is to *play* it. Not to say the rest of the game is negligible by any means — far from it, in fact — but it's the comedic charm that makes *The Simpsons Game*, like the show it's based on, so entertaining. Randy Nelson

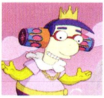
★★★★

The Year of the Simpsons: In addition to this game, *The Simpsons Movie* will be hitting DVD and Blu-ray on December 18, which is just in time for the holidays.

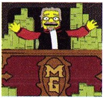
Keep A Look Out For...



Will Wright.

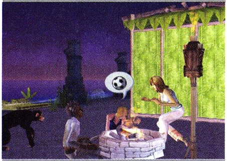


The King of All Cosmos-like Millhouse.



Matt Groening.

The Sims 2: Castaway

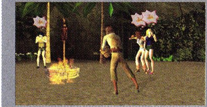


Survival has never been so fashionable

PS2 PRICE: $39.99 ESRB: Teen
PUBLISHER: LucasArts
DEVELOPER: Frontier Developments

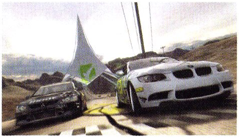
When Tom Hanks was stranded on a deserted island, the best he could create was an austere, lonely life, and a volleyball named Wilson — your Sims in *Castaway* have no such limitations. For them, survival is certainly paramount, but fashion, luxurious amenities, gourmet dining, and socializing are close seconds (all monitored by the eight typical *Sims* gauges). You start the game as a lone Sim on a bountiful island, which you reap for useable materials. As you build items like bungalows and make clothing, you unlock better crafting recipes until (eventually) you can travel to new islands and reunite with other shipwreck victims. Then, you can either create a grand island life for your castaway Sims or forge a way back to civilization. While the game's concept and execution are commendable, the horrendous load times constantly interrupt your experience — but if you don't mind waiting five seconds to access your inventory (or twenty to change zones), you'll find some humorous sandbox fun. Teresa Dun

★★★

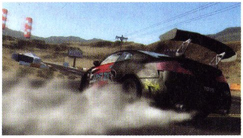


Fire can be your friend... or an enemy.

Load Time Woes: The PSP version has even worse load times than the PS2. The controls aren't as good, either.



Speed Challenge is the most thrilling of the race types available.



Autosculpt returns from *NFS: Carbon*, letting you customize your car.

Need for Speed ProStreet

You can take the pros off the street, but not the street out of the pros

PS3 PRICE: $49.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts DEVELOPER: Electronic Arts Black Box

Since the days of PS one, the *Need for Speed* series has focused on visceral arcade racing. *ProStreet* kicks up the realism — and legal — angle for a whole new thrill ride. Anyone who's played the "underground" games in the series, particularly *Carbon*, will be familiar with the tuner aspects of *ProStreet*, but for seasoned and new players alike, this trip behind the wheel will still feel fresh.

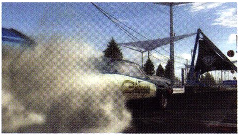
ProStreet does a fine job of melding arcade-style racing with the simulation aspects of, say, *Gran Turismo*. This is easily the most realistic-controlling game in the series, and sees the return of full damage modeling, not found in a *NFS* game since *Porsche Unleashed*. Damage is depicted very realistically on the highly accurate cars and translates into immediately apparent performance degradation. Keeping your ride in top shape is a priority. More realistic opponent A.I. also serves to heighten every race's believability.

Of course, this is still a "street" game, so the presentation — including a story that has you out to take down several Race Kings and the top tuner, the arrogant Ryo — is rowdy and colorful. The courses are largely based on real-world locations, and are, overall, good — just not great. Grip, drift, and drag events return, joined by new point-to-point speed challenges that integrate white-knuckle thrills with little room for mistakes.

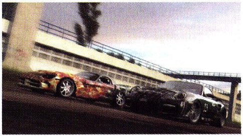
One of our favorite features is the car blueprint system. Through it, you can create multiple specialized setups (drift, grip, etc.) for each car — including the red hot Nissan GT-R — and switch between them as races necessitate. You can share these blueprints online (or find others') and receive credit every time someone wins using your setup.

ProStreet doesn't re-invent the wheel, but it definitely turns a corner for the series, and does it with enjoyable results. Randy Nelson

★★★★



Heating your tires before drag races is a mini-game that improves your grip the better you do at it.



You'll need to switch gears manually in drag races using the right stick. There's no clutch required.

Rides: Rob prefers his real-life wheels, the Infiniti G35 Coupe, while Randy keeps it old-ish school cool with the Skyline R34. We'll be trying your blueprints for these rides online!

Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops Plus

Dream Team: Our personal team (from a fanboyish perspective) consists of Big Boss, Solid Snake, and Old Snake.

The multiplayer is the main draw of this add-on.

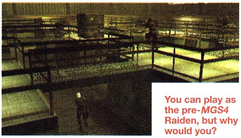
Only hardcore fans need apply

PSP PRICE: $19.99 ESRB: Mature PUBLISHER: Konami DEVELOPER: Kojima Productions

PSP | R

PS2 | R

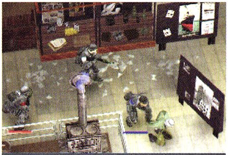
The original *Portable Ops* was one of our favorite PSP games last year, and the new expansion, *Portable Ops Plus*, offers up more of the same. It's got some cool new characters (Old Snake, Raiden, and Roy Campbell, to name a few) and an enjoyable new single-player mode called Infinity Mission where you try to reach the end of a series of stages without your team being wiped out.



You can play as the pre-*MGS4* Raiden, but why would you?

Portable Ops Plus allows you to use all your personnel and equipment from your original game save, so you'll finally have a use for all the secret characters you spent so much time earning last year. However, the game doesn't offer much beyond that. It can't be played without the original UMD, and the new single-player game only has new missions, not a brand new story. If you're a big fan of the original and love the multiplayer, you can read this as four and half stars, but most people can live without *Portable Ops Plus*. Tom Holoien

★★★



Another Shot: We'll be reviewing PSP's next squad-based action game, *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs Tactical Strike*, next issue.

SWAT: Target Liberty

This squad never really comes together

PSP PRICE: $39.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: Sierra DEVELOPER: 3G Studios

The spiritual successor to Sierra's 1998 PC release, *Police Quest: SWAT 2, SWAT: Target Liberty* introduces a similar style of real-time tactical action to PSP. Gameplay consists of room clearing, target suppression (with the option of non-lethal force), restraining civilians and foes, and interrogation. Over a series of a dozen missions, the game becomes progressively trickier, but the core formula stays the same. "Basic" is the best way to describe the experience, and "overly complicated" describes its interface. The experience is set up to be tense and engaging, but the sheer amount of simultaneous button holding required to perform most actions is very distracting. Also, the presentation is a mix of cheesy music, mediocre pre-rendered cutscenes, better in-game cutscenes, and bad voiceovers. Randy Nelson

★★

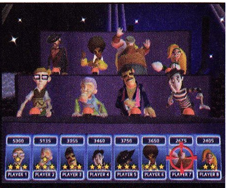
Buzz! The Mega Quiz

A big party game with big problems

PS2 PRICE: $39.99 (with controllers) ESRB: Everyone 10+ PUBLISHER: SCEA DEVELOPER: Relentless Software

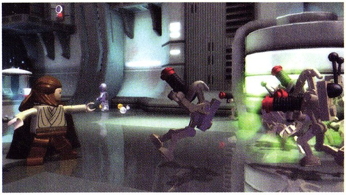
What sets *Buzz!* apart from similar efforts (which, on PS2, are few) is the use of specialized controllers — that feature a large red "buzzer" and four colored buttons — packaged with the game. Two sets of controllers can be used, for up to eight players. Beyond this novelty, however, the game's questions become repetitive after only a few games, and the "host" goes from goofy to grating after about five minutes. Plus, even on "hard," the questions seldom are. This mega quiz is a mega bore. Randy Nelson

★½



In this game type, be the first to answer correctly and you can pie other players.

LEGO Indy: LEGO Indiana Jones will have his own game in the summer of next year — just in time for the release of the fourth film, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.*



Force powers are not only useful for puzzles, but they also help spice up the combat.

LEGO Star Wars:

The Complete Saga

This is the game you're looking for

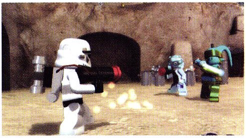
PS3 **PRICE:** $49.99 **ESRB:** Everyone 10+ **PUBLISHER:** LucasArts **DEVELOPER:** Traveller's Tales

As two previous games prove and hundreds of thousands of fans can attest, LEGO and *Star Wars* go together like peanut butter and jelly. For those who have skipped the first two games (and shame on you if you did), *LEGO Star Wars: The Complete Saga* is a great bargain. All six episodes, packed with the platforming, puzzle-solving, and charm the series is known for, in one convenient compilation.

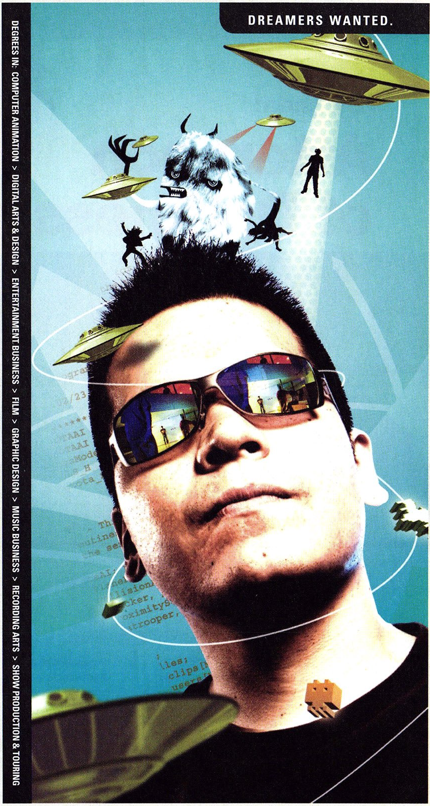
Other than the SIXAXIS controls (to steer vehicles; neat at first, but ultimately unnecessary) and the higher resolution graphics (up to 1080p), is there any reason for those who have played the first two games to play this version? Thankfully, yes.

One issue we had with the first, prequels-based game was that the vehicle segments were plain frustrating — certainly more difficult than the rest of a game that's geared toward younger/casual gamers (though still offering plenty of challenges for the more hardcore contingent). Luckily, this issue has been addressed with new, easier vehicle segments, with the original levels included as unlockable bonuses. Plus, new power-ups help vary the gameplay, and LEGO Indiana Jones is an unlockable character, meaning you can finally have that Han Solo/Indiana Jones team-up you've always dreamed of. Tom Holoien

★★★★



The LEGO-ized version of *Revenge of the Sith* is actually more entertaining than the film.



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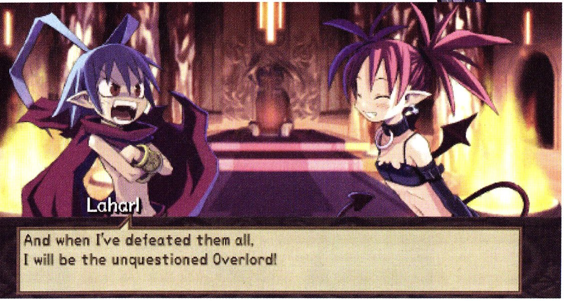
Disgaea: Afternoon of Darkness



Laharl

And when I've defeated them all,
I will be the unquestioned Overlord!

You can play Laharl or Etna's storylines.

Unlock Etna Mode: Highlight New Game and press Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, X.

Smaller package, but the adventure's even bigger and better

PSP PRICE: $39.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: NIS DEVELOPER: NIS

PSP | R

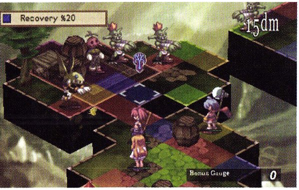
PS2 | R

A few years ago, the original PS2 *Disgaea* changed our definition of "big" RPGs by smashing conventions about max levels, damage limits, and party size, and on top of the great gameplay was a hilarious story told through memorable characters. The portable *Afternoon of Darkness* gives us a chance to relive the greatness of the original, but with excellent new additions.

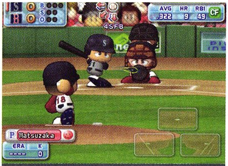
The most significant is a brand new alternate storyline with Etna, one of Prince Laharl's vassals in the original game, as the protagonist of a separate "what if" scenario. Unlockable by beating the game or entering a code at the title screen, this new storyline is completely original and just as fun as the standard storyline. It's clearly a mode for veterans, as it lacks tutorial missions and contains a number of story spoilers, but it makes *Afternoon of Darkness* worthwhile for those who logged over a hundred hours in the PS2 original. In addition, a one-on-one versus mode has been added, and you can now purchase music tracks in the game to use in the item world mode.

So often we see PSP ports that are missing features or don't control well, but *Afternoon of Darkness* is a shining example of what ports should be. It looks and sounds great on the PSP, and it's got enough new features to make it feel like a whole new game. If you're into strategy RPGs in the slightest, don't miss this chance to play a strategy classic. Tom Holoien

★★★★½



This grid only hints at the game's complexity.



MLB Licensing: The players are based on real MLB players, in both looks and playing style.

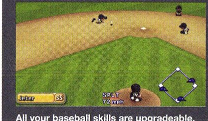
MLB Power Pros

Finally, a baseball game for the rest of us

PS2 PRICE: $29.99 ESRB: Everyone PUBLISHER: 2K Sports DEVELOPER: Konami

If you're one of those people who are intimidated by sports games, but adore RPGs, *MLB Power Pros* is just the game for you — it's possible to triumph through most of the game without touching a baseball mitt. How? By playing the two modes that have made the game such a roaring success in Japan: the Success and Season modes. You start Success mode as a freshman in college. Through studying, automated baseball practicing, and even dating(!), you'll hopefully earn entry into the Minor Leagues. In Season mode, you'll manage a team by scheduling practices, trading players, balancing the budget, and if you desire (and *only* if!), playing games during the season. When it comes to the actual baseball game itself, *MLBPP*'s pick-up-and-play elements can be deepened to near the caliber of any baseball title on the market. A plethora of other modes (multiplayer, exhibition, card collecting) rounds out this ambitious title, making it well worth the time of those who usually shy away from sports games. Teresa Dun

★★★½

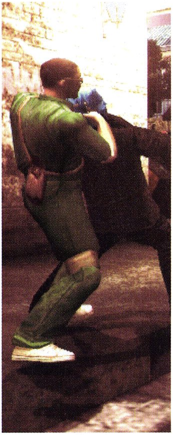


All your baseball skills are upgradeable.

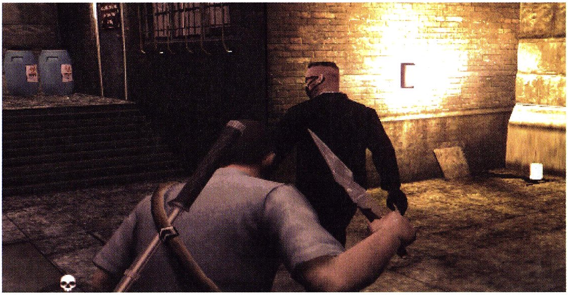
Want a hint about the twist? Look at the two protagonists' names.

Firearms aren't the stealthiest weapons, but they're effective.

Hasty executions won't net you big rewards, but they get the job done.



See? Not every execution has to be particularly gory.



Manhunt 2

The most dangerous game? Not exactly

PS2 PRICE: $29.99 ESRB: Mature PUBLISHER: Rockstar Games DEVELOPER: Rockstar London

Following a delay due to its initial "Adults Only" rating, *Manhunt 2* is finally out on store shelves — albeit in a notably nerfed form. You won't be seeing the infamous castration here, and, in fact, all of the game's signature executions are covered with a screen filter that simultaneously makes it decidedly less grisly, but adds to the omnipresent uneasiness.

The latter is actually beneficial for a game like this — a game that's all about mental instability. Daniel Lamb, a test subject for the Pickman Project, escapes from a mental institution with the help of his friend, Leo Kaspar. But not all is right in the world of Danny Lamb: he needs to uncover parts of his past while eluding the Pickman Project's numerous bounty hunters.

Running scared isn't Danny's style, though — not while Leo's around, at least. No, silently disposing of all hunters is far more effective. Like the first *Manhunt*, you must stick to the shadows and sneak up on your unsuspecting prey, then, with weapon in hand (and having a weapon is a prerequisite — even a fire extinguisher or telephone), hold down the square button to start the execution. The longer you hold it down, the more brutal it is, from Hasty to Violent to Gruesome. A Hasty execution with a nightstick, for example, leads to a quick crack on the skull, while a Gruesome execution leads to a full-fledged beat down.

Not only is it more sickeningly satisfying to go for the Gruesome, it's more rewarding, as you regain health for more violent executions. Just be careful, as Gruesomes take more time to initiate, leaving you open to being spotted. If you are, it's wisest to flee than to fight, considering how quickly you can be beaten down yourself.

Firearms play a larger role now, addressing a key complaint about the first game (that the game was too slow until you got firearms later on). But Rockstar slightly overcompensated: you get firearms pretty early, but some levels feel more like *Grand Theft Auto*, with almost too much running and gunning. It's enjoyable, of course, and a nice reprieve from the usual feeling of intense anxiety and paranoia, but the hunters don't feel nearly as intimidating when you're packing an assault rifle.

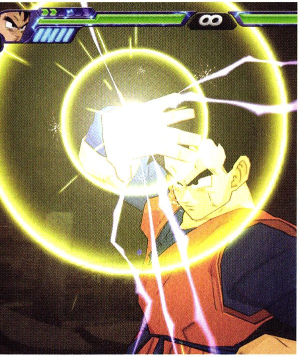
Our main complaint with the game, and what keeps it from being truly outstanding, is not the subject matter, but the story. The basic premise is sound, but the "twist" is entirely too predictable. Story aside, however, *Manhunt 2* is an important game — not because of the controversy surrounding it, but because it is one of the final few original PS2 games. Flawed, yes, and controversial, too, but entertaining nonetheless. Teresa Dun

★★★½

Those Wonderful Toys

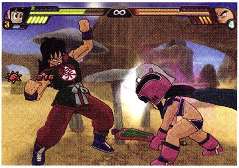
Each weapon is assigned to one of four categories: projectile items (bottles and cans), single-use one-handed weapons (syringes and glass shards), multi-use, one-handed weapons (pliers and handguns), and multi-use two-handed weapons (sledge hammers and shotguns). A couple of our favorites: the katana because, well, it's a katana, and the assault rifle for when, to quote Samuel L. Jackson in *Jackie Brown*, "you absolutely, positively have to kill every motherf---er in the room."

Two characters means two endings. You'll get one by beating the game, and then go to the chapter select to get the other.



Relive the best bits with the Battle Replay system.

Time it right and you can teleport out of harm's way.



With over 150 characters, you have lots of choices.

Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 3

PS2 | R

A breath of fresh air for one of gaming's oldest series

PS2 PRICE: $39.99 ESRB: Teen PUBLISHER: Atari DEVELOPER: Spike

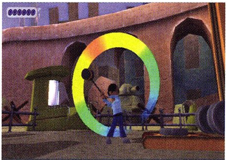
With so many *Dragon Ball* games on the market, it's hard to imagine that the developers can improve the long-running series. Thankfully, *Budokai Tenkaichi 3* exceeds our (admittedly low) expectations with some significant gameplay changes and the largest roster of any *Dragon Ball Z* game to date.

The *Tenkaichi* series has traditionally focused on massive fighting arenas and fast-paced, action-fighting gameplay, and this one is no different. The fighting system has been overhauled, however, condensing most actions down to two buttons, making long combos and powerful special moves easier to execute. Additionally, movement has been further refined, and you can now instantly teleport out of harm's way or behind your enemy with a well-timed press of a button. Other gameplay tweaks include a day-night system where characters can transform during a full moon, a replay system that allows you to record and playback fights, and some new game modes, like playing through alternate storylines that deviate from the anime. Even though *Tenkaichi 3* lacks online play, it does have the new "Disc Fusion System," allowing you to unlock the Ultimate Battle mode by inserting either of the old *Tenkaichi* discs.

What could potentially be *DBZ* greatness is marred by a few flaws, though. The camera, especially when playing split-screen, is a problem — an issue that plagued the previous games. Most attacks are mapped to a couple of buttons, so combos essentially involve mashing like billy-o, and ultimately implies that the game lacks depth. The learning curve is surprisingly steep, too, and the huge number of characters (over 150) will probably confuse those unfamiliar with the series. After three games, you should know by now that this series is primarily for longtime fans, and they have plenty to like. Tom Hoioien

★★★½

Sound Off: If you're sick of the laughable English voices in *Tenkaichi 3*, try activating the Japanese language track in the options menu. It's still a bit annoying, but it's definitely an improvement.



Thrillville: Off the Rails

Who knew running an amusement park could be so... tedious?

PS2 PRICE: $39.99 ESRB: Everyone 10+
PUBLISHER: LucasArts
DEVELOPER: Frontier Developments

As manager of the Thrillville theme parks, you're on a mission: triumph through competitor Globo-Joy's attempts to sabotage your parks and create the hottest hangouts around. Globo-Joy may try to hypnotize your guests, but through a series of Missions (build coasters, launch ad campaigns, flirt with guests, challenge rivals to carnival mini-games, and more), you'll beat down the competition. To accomplish your duties, you're required to play *DDR*-like rhythm games, old school beat 'em ups, *Mario*-esque platformers and every other genre possible. However, quantity comes at the cost of quality — because none of the games are the main focus of the game, they all feel shallow and repetitive. As a "to-do" list, the game is somewhat satisfying, since you'll complete missions rather quickly, but as an amusement park sim, the experience is disjointed — in spite of all the micromanagement involved, you'll never earn a sense of control over your parks. Teresa Dun

★★

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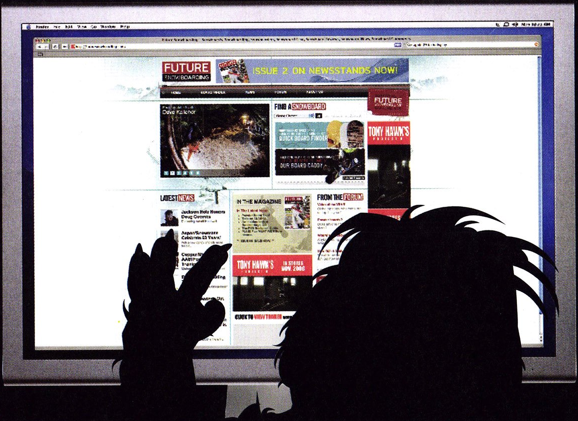
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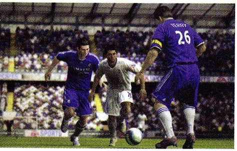
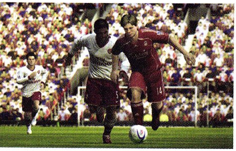
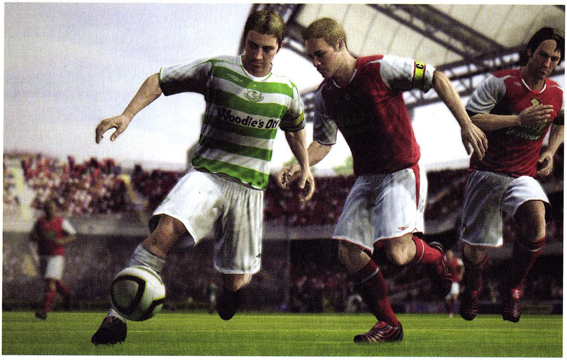


The players do look incredibly realistic, so you can easily identify your favorites.



Though it may look really sensational in screenshots, you're not likely to see this angle to the action. Still, in the new Be-A-Pro mode, you will see the field from an over-the-shoulder viewpoint.



Since David Beckham spent most of his much-publicized move to the L.A. Galaxy on the injury list, you can use *FIFA 08* to see if his presence would have taken them to the MLS play-offs.

FIFA 08

Another solid rendition of the beautiful game.

PS3 PRICE: $59.99 ESRB: Everyone PUBLISHER: EA Sports DEVELOPER: EA Sports

PS3 | R

Year on year, I expect more and more from EA's *FIFA* franchise. Year on year, I end up ultimately satisfied with whatever feature set has been added or tweaked, yet can list several issues that still need addressing. So it is with *FIFA 08*.

For soccer fans, the availability of every team and player in every league you may possibly want to experience is a consistently huge draw. Taking your favorite team through the deep, complex, rewarding management mode sits at the heart of the strategic game. If you're passionate about your team and its potential, even in a virtual setting (as I am with Sheffield United), then losing yourself to the player transfers, contracts, tactics, and day-to-day economics makes *FIFA 08* all you need.

On the pitch, the game still showcases weaknesses that should have been fixed years ago. Most egregious is the animation system that's criminally sluggish. While flicking the left stick will elicit speed bursts and other moves, each transition is slow, and makes stringing fluid moves together trickier than it should be. The vaunted A.I. system, where 35 decisions are processed for thousands of potential moves, works better for the opposing team than it does for your own players' tactical awareness. It took significant manipulating of the pretty deep tactical options to get my wingers overlapping and providing passing options that were vital to getting scoring chances on the higher of the five difficulty settings. Winning, in *FIFA*, is not easy.

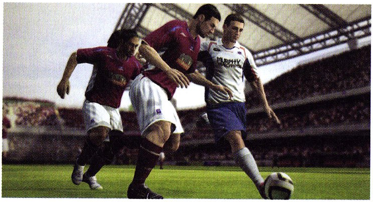
The Be-A-Pro mode of putting you in the shoes of a single player using an over-the-shoulder camera view takes some getting used to. The challenge is to stay in position, and not resort to second-grade soccer where every kid runs for the ball. Aside from being the first step towards planning ten-on-ten multiplayer in future *FIFA* iterations, I'm hard pressed to see the long-term value in this mode. Still, it's definitely worth trying to see what a game is like from ground level.

The visuals are outstanding and integrate the signature moves of several prominent players, which is fine if you need to see Ronaldinho's jinks, for example. Taking your skills online is also possible in leagues mapping real world fixtures, though we've heard of connection woes.

FIFA 08 delivers a pretty complete soccer package that we still hope will improve as the specter of pressure from Konami's *Pro Evolution Soccer* looms on the horizon. Rob Smith

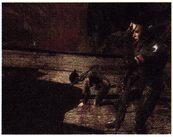
★★★½

I must protest that not one of these screenshots showcases the talents of my fine red and white wizards, the mighty Sheffield United. Up the Blades!

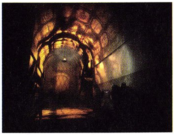


Feeling the competitive heat: 2008 promises to be a banner year for PlayStation 3 soccer fans as Konami brings its fabulous *Pro Evolution Soccer* series to the platform. *FIFA* will have some serious competition.

Here's your chance to get up close and personal with the evil, stinking, rotting Undead. Delightful.


Yes, it's a river of blood. Just imagine the ungodly stench…

Just when you thought things couldn't possibly get any worse…


Some of the environments are eerily beautiful. Most, though, come straight from Hell.

Clive Barker's Jericho

Sick, twisted, evil… and damned good

PS3 PRICE: $59.99 ESRB: Mature PUBLISHER: Codemasters DEVELOPER: Mercury Steam / Alchemic Productions

Acclaimed horror author Clive Barker makes a living out of scaring the bejeebus out of fans looking for a chill thrill. The second game to bear his name (the first, *Undying*, was an underrated *Unreal Tournament*-engine action shooter for the PC) is absolutely not for the faint of heart, nor the weak of spirit or stomach.

You begin the game as Captain Devin Ross, leader of the Jericho Team, a military outfit of psychically-gifted soldiers that has existed since the biblical battle of Jericho. They exist to keep The Firstborn, an evil entity, from breaking through to our world from the timeless, ancient, evil city of Al-Khali to destroy humanity.

Jericho really gets interesting right after you die, which happens almost as soon as the game begins. You can then transfer your spirit to any of the remaining seven team members in order to utilize each member's unique weaponry and psychic abilities. It's in deciding which weapon to use in any given situation that provides the game's tactical depth. Sometimes it's better to just light up the grid with Delgado's mini-gun, while in another situation you'd be better off casting Church's Blood Spell to destroy enemies. Other psychic weapons include telekinesis, divination, time/space alteration, exorcism, pyromancy (think *Fire-Starter*), and channeling. At first, I relied on the standard weapons, but as I grew to understand the psychic weapons, I used them more. Hell, I needed them all.

That's because *Jericho* is no walk in the park. Your enemies are putrescent, malignant, powerful denizens of Hell… and beyond. Firefights are sudden, confusing, and deadly. Environments can be attractive and repellent at the same time, like golden halls slathered with blood and excrement. The soundtrack features haunting music accompanied by buzzing flies and the sound of wet flesh being sundered, while the dialogue… well, let's just say you'd better play wearing headphones if you have sensitive ears around.

Sure, it's friendly. It just wants to swap spit, that's all.

Jericho is pure Clive Barker, and that means that it's not for everyone, especially young children or people with weak stomachs. If you don't fall into one of those categories, this may just be the perfect game for a dark, stormy night. Bill Donohue

★★★★

The Divine Comedy, written by Dante Alighieri, could be seen as the inspiration for the evil city of Al-Khali and its layers of time and space.

PS3 | R

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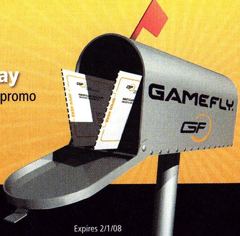

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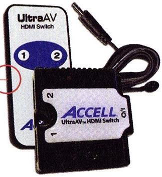
The concept of putting an all-inclusive 5.1 sound system on your head sounds good — no costly home theater system or tricky running of speaker wires required. But does the concept work in reality, especially when it's spec'd for true Dolby Digital performance? In the case of Tritton's AX360 headphones, coming in around a modest $100 price tag from most online retailers, the answer is no. Simply put, even with the best 5.1 encoding in your games, the headphones can't compare to a speaker setup, and they really don't deliver that much of an "immersive" experience anyway. In-game audio quality is decent, although for music they are especially tinny, with muted highs and muddy lows. The "rumble" or "vibration" feature just boosts lows and is decidedly non-rumbly. The built-in microphone is designed for Xbox 360; there's no making it work with PS3. All told, for the price you can find much better fidelity in standard two-channel, over-the-ear phones. Randy Nelson

★★

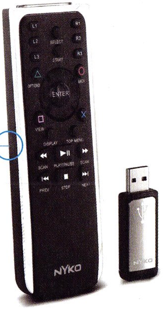


Accell HDMI 1.3a 2-to-1 Switcher

$99.99 | www.accellcables.com

We reviewed XtremeMac's 4-to-1 HDMI switcher in the pages of PSM; here's a new solution that claims to be aimed squarely at PS3 users. In fact, its packaging boasts support for 1440p resolution. PS3 doesn't output it, but maybe PS4 will! In any case, Accell's offering retails at the same price as our last reviewed switcher, but offers half the outputs. However, it doesn't require an external power supply and includes a handy IR receiver on a wire so it can be hidden from view and still pick up your remote's commands. Given the price, however, these features aren't anywhere near enough for us to recommend it over XtremeMac's unit. 1440P or not, this one's a pass. Randy Nelson

★★



Nyko BlueWave PS3 Remote

$19.99 | www.nyko.com

If you have a fancy learning remote, you're probably wishing that you could set it up to control movie and music playback on your PS3 without needing Sony's own Bluetooth remote. Nyko's infrared-based BlueWave remote will fulfill some of your needs. Running on two AAAs and using a USB dongle that occupies one of the PS3's front ports, the remote features all of the necessary functions for playing, pausing, skipping, etc. Well, except for eject and — most importantly — the PS button for powering on or off your system. Given that it's only a few bucks less than Sony's remote ($19.99 versus $24.99) that isn't even line-of-sight, we have to wave you away from this 3/4-hearted attempt. Randy Nelson

★★

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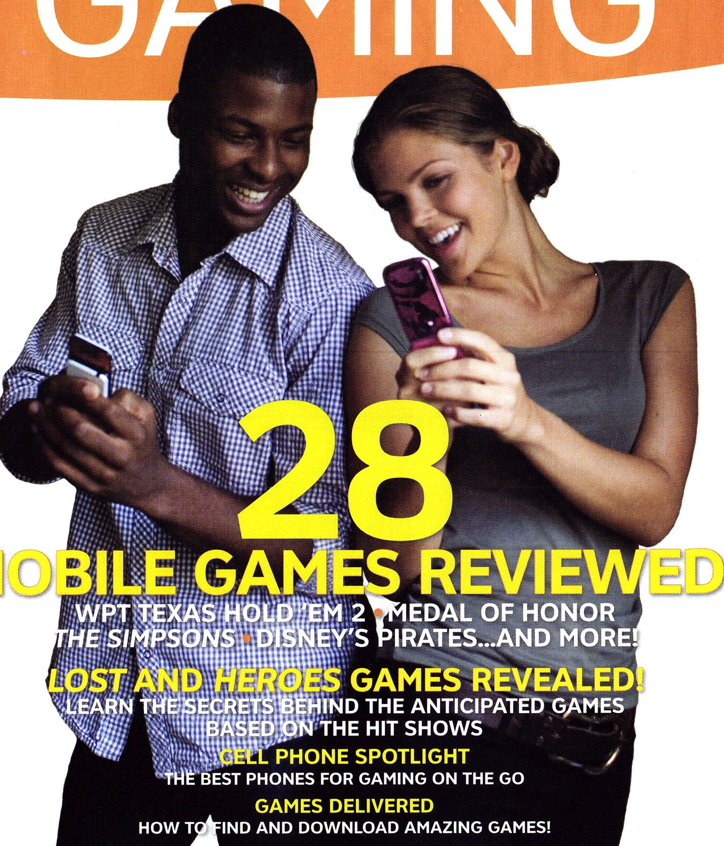

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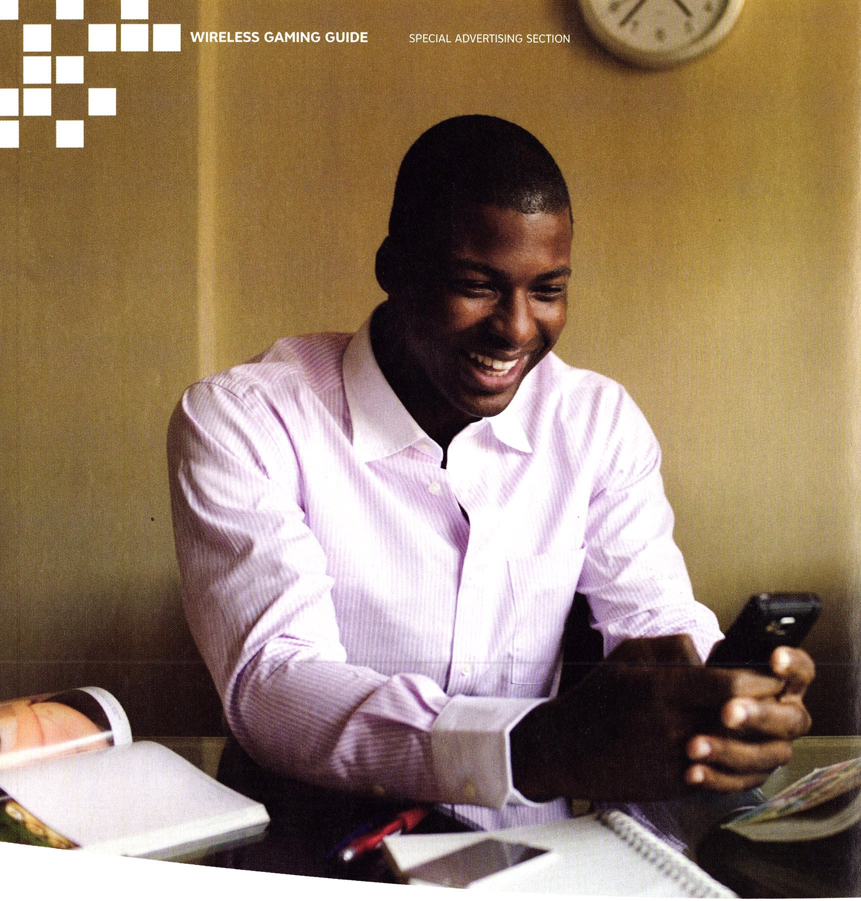

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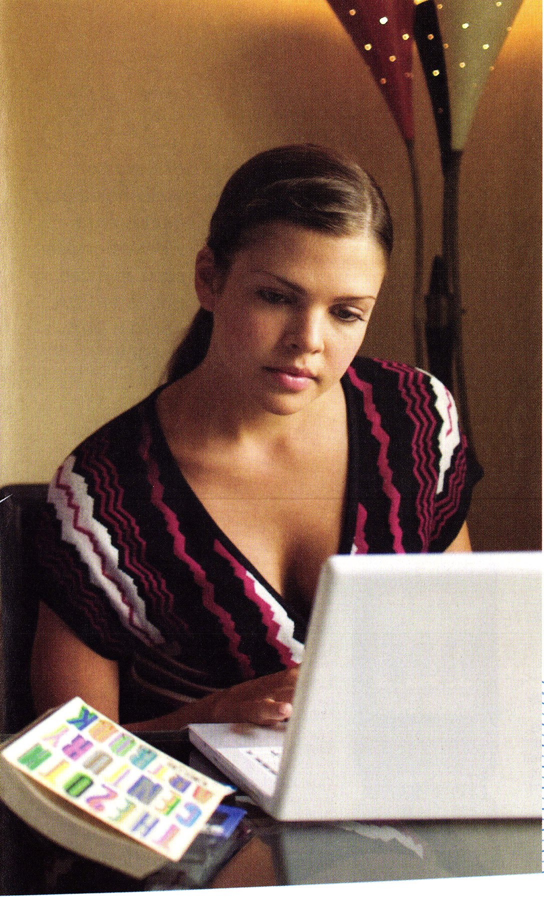

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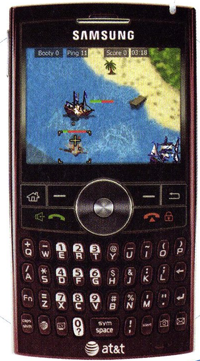

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- Bluetooth 2.0 connectivity
- Real-time email delivery
- Quad-band world capability
- Blazing 3G data speed

shown Disney **Disney's Pirates Multiplayer**

GAMING DOESN'T HAVE to get in the way of work, especially when you have the ultimate entertainment and business gadget. The ultra sleek Samsung BlackJack II merges play and productivity while remaining only half an inch thin. Its well-designed formfactor makes it comfortable to hold and the sharp 2.4 inch screen is easy on the eyes—a great combination for long gaming sessions. A full keypad ensures speedy text-messaging and the jog wheel makes one-handed navigation a breeze. Perfect for one-button games!

LG **Trax**

THE LG TRAX IS A 3.5 ounce flip phone packed with beefy features in a lightweight package. Its impressive suite of multimedia tricks includes MP3 playback with music ID recognition, streaming video content with AT&T's CV (video) service, and even digital radio broadcasts through XM Radio. Blazing fast 3G connectivity is great for fast gameplay and multiplayer action, and its speedy processor will let you access voice and data simultaneously. We especially dig the unique external touchpad for convenient music control.

features

- 1.3mp camera with 4x zoom
- Full-featured music and video suite
- Bluetooth for both calls and music playback
- Instant messaging with AOL and Yahoo!
- Quad-band world capability and 3G speed
- USB port for PC data transfer
- One-touch speakerphone

shown Gameloft **Shrek the Third**

34%

of heads of households play games on a wireless device, such as a cell phone or PDA, up from 20% in 2002.

Source: ESA, 2007

One out of every twenty cell phone users plays mobile games **almost every day**.

Source: M:Metrics, July 2007

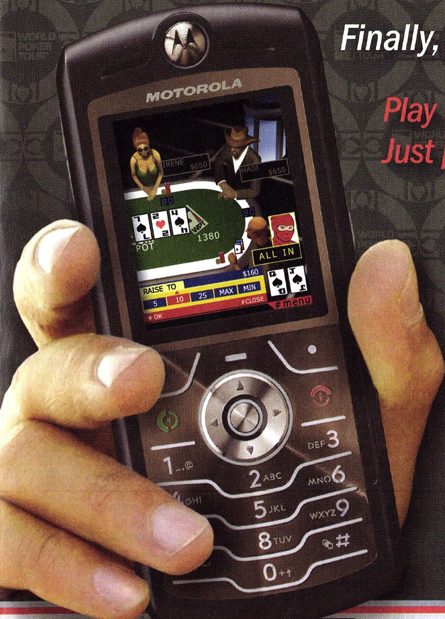
20 Million

The projected number of cellular subscribers who have downloaded games to play.

Source: M:Metrics, July 2007

Finally, a mobile game for gamers.

Play on your phone or play online.
Just play.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HADI $650
POT 1380
ALL IN
$160
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5 10 25 MAX MIN
OK
#CLOSE
#menu

GAME OF THE MONTH JULY 2007 IGN.com

"...will keep both hardcore players and newcomers glued to their screens (both of them) for months to come. Download it today." – IGN.com

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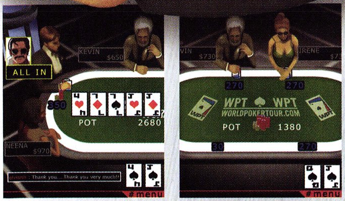
WORLD POKER TOUR
TEXAS HOLD 'EM 2


ALL IN
KEVIN $650
NEENA $970
350
POT 2680
Thank you... Thank you very much!!
#menu
IRENE
$730
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WPT WPT
WORLDPOKERTOUR.COM
POT 1380
30
#menu

- *Full multiplayer or solo gameplay*
- *Set up your own private table*
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Get the game for as little as $3.99.*

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text keyword **ACES** *to* **46966**

1. Select NEW TEXT MESSAGE on your phone.
2. Type in the keyword ACES for the game TEXAS HOLD 'EM 2
3. Send to 46966 and download TEXAS HOLD 'EM 2

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HANDS·ON MOBILE™

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Samsung **SYNC**

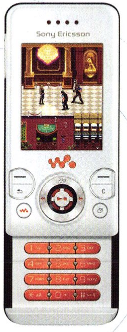
KEEP YOUR FRIENDS CLOSE but your music even closer with Samsung's Sync handset. You'll never have to squint when navigating through your contacts and song playlist with the impressive 2.24 inch internal display, while the external screen and touch controls simplifies access to music playback features. The best feature is its 2.0 megapixel camera, which takes crystal clear photos and video you can share. And if you've filled up the included memory space with snapshots and music, just add more storage with a MicroSD card. The SYNC also has a large portfolio of available games!

at&t
SAMSUNG

features

- **High resolution 2.0mp camera with video recording**
- **Bluetooth connectivity with stereo support**
- **Quad-band world capability and 3G speed**
- **Instant messaging with AOL, Yahoo!, and MSN**
- **MicroSD memory expansion slot**
- **Hands-free speakerphone**
- **Preloaded games!**

shown Gamevil **Baseball Superstars 2007**



features

- **2.0mp camera with 4x zoom**
- **Built-in FM tuner**
- **Bluetooth wireless connectivity**
- **Memory Stick Micro expansion slot**
- **MegaBass equalizer software**
- **Shake Control**
- **Speakerphone**
- **Integrated 3D acceleration for gaming**

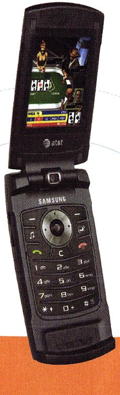
shown Gameloft **Heroes**

Sony Ericsson **W580i**

THE LATEST IN SONY'S WALKMAN branded phone line, the W580i lives up to its musically inclined pedigree by sporting a myriad of music and gaming features. This svelte slider sports a fully functional Walkman MP3 player, FM radio tuner, and unique MegaBass equalizer to deliver vibrant sounding songs. The tactile keyboard is very responsive and the sharp color screen displays great game graphics. A Memory Stick Micro expansion slot ensures that you'll never run out of storage space for your multimedia, which is handy since the W580i touts a crisp 2.0 megapixel camera with video recording capabilities. Sweet suite!

Samsung **A717**

TALK ABOUT SLIM! At only half an inch thin, the Samsung A717 clamshell phone is the most compact 3G phone we've ever seen. But this compact communicator also packs a fierce punch in its elegant design. The slender external screen shows valuable time and signal strength information, and flip the phone open to reveal a vibrant 240x320 internal display. A dedicated music button grants access to the audio player, which can stream melodies from internet radio stations to a Bluetooth headset or the speakerphone. The A717's killer app is Video Share, a feature that lets you send or receive live video streams to another compatible 3G phone during a call.



features

- **2.0mp camera with 4x digital zoom**
- **Live Video Share with compatible phones**
- **Access to AT&T's cellular video service**
- **Bluetooth 2.0 wireless connectivity**
- **Built in AOL, MSN, and Yahoo! instant messaging**
- **Sharp screen and 3G speeds for great-looking multiplayer games.**

shown Hands-on **WPT Texas Hold 'Em 2**

20.5%
The percentage of all mobile subscribers who play at least one game every month on their handsets.
Source: M:Metrics, July 2007

91%
of parents surveyed who have children under the age of 18 said they monitor the content of the computer and video games their children play.
Source: ESA, 2007

28.2%
of gamers are under the age of 18.
Source: ESA, 2007

The average game player age is **33** and has been playing games for **12** years.
Source: ESA, 2007

50%
of wireless games played are Puzzle and Trivia games.
Source: ESA, 2007

Only 15%
of online and wireless games played are action or sports games.
Source: ESA, 2007

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I being entertained

GamE oN

Sony Ericsson
Ms. PAC-MAN
namco
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SIMS 2
EA
BEJEWELED
DINER DASH 2
Story Mode
Endless Shift
High Scores
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Instructions
About
LUMINES
block challenge
WALKMAN

aNd on, and on, and on, and on.

Get your groove on while you game away on the Sony Ericsson W580 Walkman® phone.
Pick one up today and try out these 5 preloaded demos games.

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Sony Ericsson
WALKMAN

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Gaming for Everyone

HOW THE INCREASING NUMBER OF YOUNG GAMERS CAN FIND A SAFE MOBILE GAMING EXPERIENCE

TODAY'S CELL PHONES ARE wondrous devices. Their amazing ability to facilitate productivity is only rivaled by their power to provide entertainment. For gamers, this is great news because gaming is an important pillar of the modern mobile lifestyle. And with a projected user base of over two hundred million mobile subscribers (M:Metrics, July 2007), it's no surprise that mobile gamers transcend all age groups.

But one surprising detail may be that a significant number of these mobile gamers are between the ages of 13 and 17. In fact, forty percent of all mobile subscribers in that age group play games on their phones, the largest fraction of gamers across all age groups. To ensure that kids are receiving safe and fun mobile gaming experiences, game makers specifically develop titles that the entire family can enjoy together. We spoke with Trish Halamandaris, vice-president at Disney, to find out how publishers are taking a role in a creating kid-friendly mobile game environment.

How can they get involved in their children's cell phone gaming?

Children have access to a variety of entertainment and information choices on their phones. Parents should take interest in the mobile games their kids play just as seriously as they do with console or PC games. It is ultimately up to parents to decide what mobile gaming is acceptable for their children. Games from Disney should give parents peace of mind because they are developed with a family audience in mind, come from a high quality, trusted brand and are based on world renowned properties from within the Walt Disney family. We value the trust we receive from parents and we encourage parents to engage in an open dialogue with their kids when it comes to mobile games.

How should parents decide what's suitable for their children to play?

We have always felt that it should be up to parents to decide what content they are comfortable allowing their children to access. With our slate of mobile games, parents can be assured that Disney takes great care to ensure that the trusted Disney brand is at the heart of all of our titles.

62% of parents who play games with their children do so because it's a good opportunity to monitor game content.

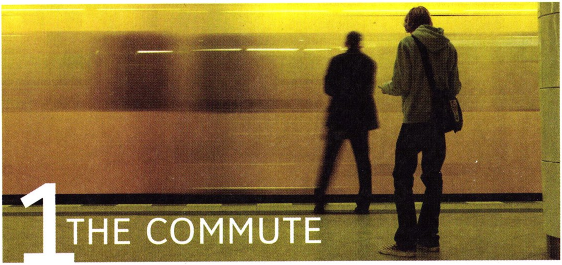
In the same group, 71% of those parents play games to socialize with their kids.

Among "gamer parents," 80% report that they play video games with their children, and two-thirds feel that playing games has brought their families closer together.

Source: ESA, 2007)

Top 5 Places to Game

TAKE GAMING OUT OF THE CONFINES OF THE LIVING ROOM! WHERE DO *YOU* PLAY?

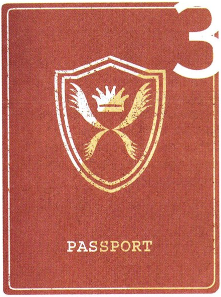


1 THE COMMUTE

NAPPING ON THE TRAIN to work is outdated. The cutting-edge commuter uses the daily bus ride to stretch his brain with some mobile games. One-button games on AT&T phones let you hold on to rails if you're standing, and many games have mini-games or a quick-play mode for brief trips.

2 WAITING FOR FRIENDS

ARRIVING LATE TO GROUP outings may be fashionable, but early birds reap the rewards of tardiness with time to sneak in a mobile gaming session. A round of Glu's *Diner Dash 2* before heading out to dinner is the perfect way to start the evening.

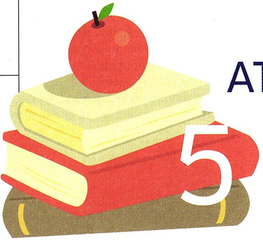


3 VACATIONS

IF YOU HAPPEN TO be stuck with parents on an annual family reunion, wireless games will keep you company and thankfully away from nosy aunts. And even if your vacations are spent relaxing on a beach in Hawaii, you can still navigate AT&T's vast library of games on its always-accessible MEdia Mall.

4 AT THE GYM

WHETHER YOU'RE PACING ON a treadmill or sweating on a stationary cycle, time quickly flies by when you're enjoying some mobile gaming. AT&T's latest phones also have plenty of music playback features, so you've got your watch clock, MP3 player, and gaming console all in one device to spruce up your workout routine.



5 AT SCHOOL

STUDYING FOR HOURS ON end can be taxing for your mind, so remember to take breaks. Reward your scholarly efforts by jumping into a soothing game of I-Play's *Skipping Stone* while holed up in the library. Just remember to turn off sounds or wear headphones as a courtesy to nearby bookworms!

ANYWHERE MEANS *EVERYWHERE*

There's really no place you can't or shouldn't play games. The truth is that mobile gaming has soundly established itself as a legitimate gaming platform. Gamers aren't just playing on their cell phones to pass the time—they're digging wireless gaming on AT&T because it's a great way to have fun. Exciting new titles showcasing advanced graphics and deep gameplay make gaming on the go a compelling alternative to traditional forms video gaming.

at&t

How-To: Download Games

LOADING GAMES ONTO YOUR PHONE IS AS EASY AS 1-2-3!

step 1

BEFORE MAKING ANY GAME purchases, make sure that you have a cell phone that supports wireless gaming. Check www.att.com/mediamall to see if your phone is listed, or pick one of the gaming-certified phones we recommended earlier. You must have a phone with internet access for data downloads, and for some games, SMS messaging support to confirm purchases. These features also have to be enabled on your phone and subscription plan.

step 2

AT&T SUBSCRIBERS HAVE TWO ways to download games. The first is through AT&T's MEdia Mall digital download portal. Phones with internet browsers can access MEdia Mall directly from the handset. From there, choose the Games listing to browse through available titles. Just hit the Buy button to complete your purchase!

Alternatively, you can visit MEdia Mall online from your home computer at www.att.com/mediamall. Select your phone make and model from the list on the sidebar. Not every game is compatible with all handsets because each title is specially developed to accommodate the screen resolution and features of individual phone models. Once you've picked a game, just input your information to have the software sent directly to your phone!

With both methods, game purchases are billed directly to your monthly cell phone plan.

step 3

JUST WAIT FOR PURCHASED games to be downloaded onto your handset*. Games will be found in the "My Stuff" or "Games" folder from the phone's main menu. That's it! Now go ahead and play!

*Standard data charges will be applied for the game downloads.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!

Want to give games a spin before deciding to buy them? AT&T's MEdia Mall has free weekly downloads of game demos for you to sample. Just head to the "Free this Week" category in the Games section to pick the games you want to try! You can also choose to receive alerts of new game releases by texting "YES" from your phone to 42637.

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50
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- ★ Wireless Gaming World Editor's Award

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GET THE NEW **CRASH BANDICOOT®** MOBILE GAME.

CRASH® OF THE TITANS

CRASH OF THE TITANS
17502
83
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

- Jack your enemies & wield enormous power.
- Use one enemy to blow away the others!

Text "**Titans**" to **88788**

vivendi GAMES MOBILE

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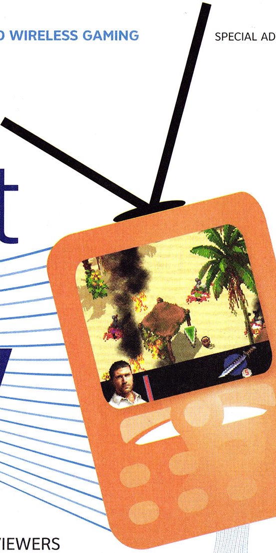
Must Play TV



LOST AND *HEROES* HAVE CAPTIVATED TELEVISION VIEWERS ACROSS THE NATION. NOW THAT THEY'RE BEING ADAPTED FOR YOUR CELL PHONE, WE SPOKE WITH GAMELOFT VICE-PRESIDENT GONZAGUE DE VALLOIS TO UNCOVER JUICY DETAILS BEHIND THESE TWO HIGHLY ANTICIPATED MOBILE GAMES.

How is GameLoft bringing those shows to cell phones?
In *Heroes: The Official Mobile Game*, you play the role of one of three characters—Hiro Nakamura, Nikki Sanders and Peter Petrelli. You utilize each character's super power to your advantage as you navigate through 11 levels and four locations—New York City, future New York City, the museum and Las Vegas. The game incorporates fan favorite moments from Season One as well as an exclusive sneak preview of yet to released scenes from Season Two.

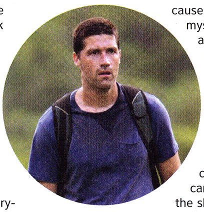
In *LOST*, you play in the role of Jack and help him navigate through the island. You explore all the main locations: the hatch, the jungle, the black rock and the beach. The key moments from Season One are incorporated into the game: the crash scene, escaping the black smoke, meeting the Others, etc. The great thing about both of these games is that it clearly manages to recreate the main storyline, but the player does not need to know the show to enjoy the gaming experience.

How are the games' stories related to the plots of the actual shows?
Both games stay true to the storyline of their respective shows. Because both shows have such a huge fan base it was important to not steer too far from the main plot. For both *Heroes* and *LOST*, we worked closely with the writers of the show. For *LOST*, the dialogue was written by the team of people behind the series. For *Heroes* we worked very closely with one of the writers to ensure all the levels stayed true to the story.

What do fans of the shows gain from playing the mobile game?
Fans are able to relive their favorite show anytime and anywhere. Especially since *LOST* is on hiatus until February 2008, fans are able to get their fix through the mobile game. Mobile games are all about entertainment on the go; they're short bursts of fun during moments when you have two minutes or two hours.

What are some of the challenges of creating a mobile game based on TV franchises?
The games we choose to develop that are based on a television show usually have mass appeal and a very big fan base. That being said, the fans have an expectation of what the story should be. It needs to stay true to the storyline. Not to say that you can't get creative with it, but the fans need to be able to recognize the core of the plot. For example, when we developed [the game] *Desperate Housewives* we decided to do it in a board game style because the show is based on clues, mysteries and a "who done it" atmosphere. It reminded us of the classic board game *Clue*, so we decided to go with that format, which worked.

One of the biggest challenges in designing for cell phones is designing the game within a limited space. For a game like *Heroes* that covers all of Season One, you can't include all 24 episodes of the show. You have to select the key moments and then work to incorporate them, but also manage the space for sound, graphics, etc. You have anywhere from 600kb to 2mb to work with and that's not much at all compared to console games, which come on spacious DVDs.



Play as Dr. Jack Shephard and explore the mysterious island in the *LOST* mobile game.

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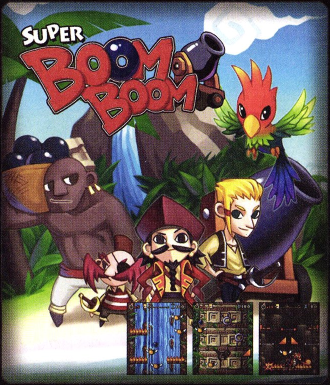
Passing time will never be the same!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BOOM
BOOM

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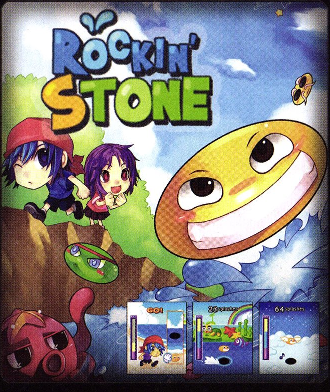
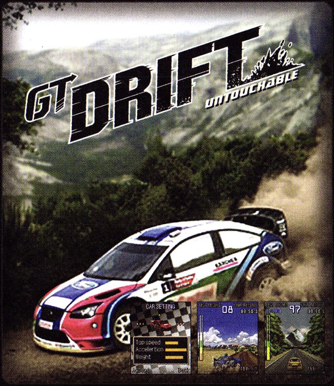
SUPERSTARS

Text "gamevil" to "fun" (386) now to get these great games and more!

Standard text messaging and data rates apply.


ROCKIN'
STONE
GO!
23 splashes
64 splashes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Why not try 'em before you buy 'em!

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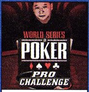
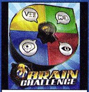
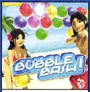
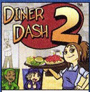

WORLD SERIES POKER PRO CHALLENGE
WG710

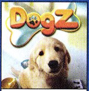

BRAIN CHALLENGE
WG706


BUBBLE BASH!
WG705

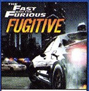
WG722

Cafe solitaire
WG717

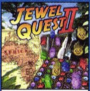

DINER DASH 2
WG711



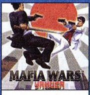
WG718


The Fast and the Furious FUGITIVE
WG724

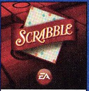
WG707


JEWEL QUEST II
WG725

The Legend of SPYRO A NEW BEGINNING
WG729


MAFIA WARS YAKUZA
WG727

WG712


SCRABBLE
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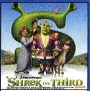
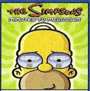
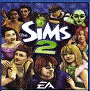
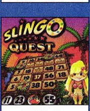

SHREK THE THIRD
WG731


THE SIMPSONS MINUTES TO MELTDOWN
WG701


The SIMS 2
EA
WG702


SLINGO QUEST
WG728

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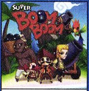
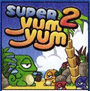
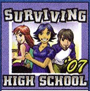
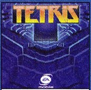
SUPER ACTION! HERO
WG720


SUPER BOOM BOOM
WG719

Super Sketcher
WG715

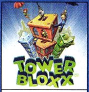

Super yum yum 2
WG726

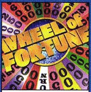

SURVIVING HIGH SCHOOL '07
WG721



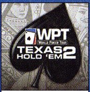
WG704

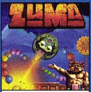
TinkerBell Fly
WG723


TOWER BLOXX
WG716


WHEEL OF FORTUNE
WG713

WG714


WPT TEXAS HOLD 'EM 2
WG708



WG709

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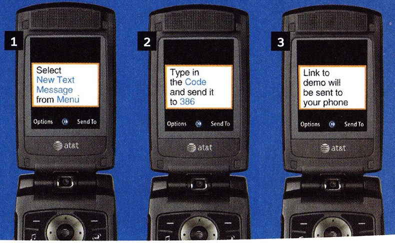
Options
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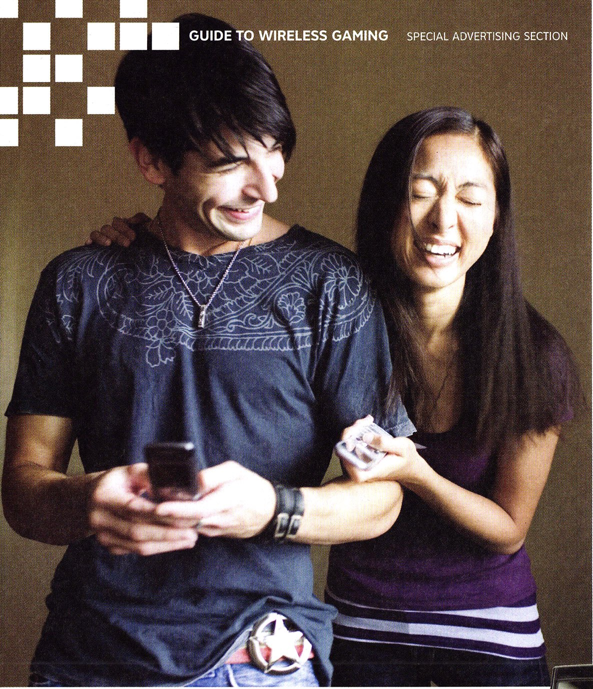
at&t

1 Select New Text Message from Menu

2 Type in the Code and send it to 386

3 Link to demo will be sent to your phone

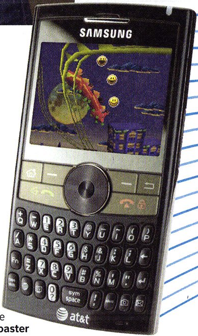
at&t
Your world. Delivered.



WE'VE SHOWN YOU some of AT&T's amazingly powerful gaming phones and taught you how to deliver wireless games to your handset. Now it's time to meet a few of mobile gaming's superstars. We're talking, of course, about the games themselves! Whether you're a fan of nail-biting action or TV show trivia, we've got 28 excellent picks that are accessible to gamers of all ages and experience. From football fanatics to puzzle gurus, we've got you covered. Just turn the page to connect to the thrilling world of portable play!

What to Play Now!

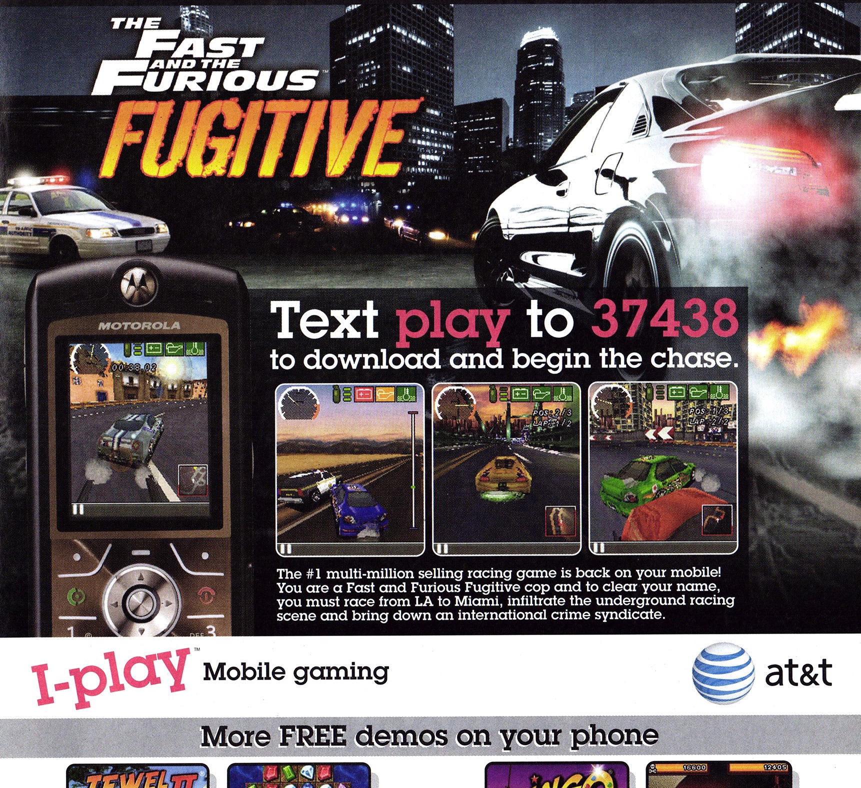
28 MUST-PLAY GAMES FROM AT&T THAT YOU CAN'T MISS!



shown
Digital Chocolate
Roller Coaster w3D Crush

at&t

FREE games on the go!


MOTOROLA
00:38.02
POS: 2/3
LAP: 1/2
POS: 1/3
LAP: 2/2

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS™ FUGITIVE

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to download and begin the chase.

The #1 multi-million selling racing game is back on your mobile! You are a Fast and Furious Fugitive cop and to clear your name, you must race from LA to Miami, infiltrate the underground racing scene and bring down an international crime syndicate.

I-play™ Mobile gaming

at&t

More FREE demos on your phone

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GOLD

SLINGO QUEST
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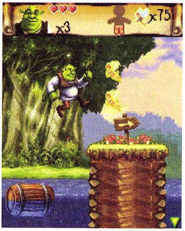
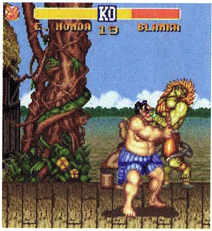
Action



Gameloft

SHREK THE THIRD

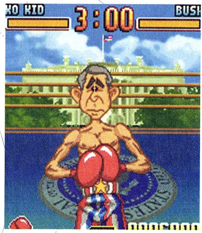
EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE OGRE TAKES a leap from the big screen into the palm of your hand with the official mobile game for 2007's animated blockbuster. In *Shrek the Third*, you play as either the eponymous hero or the heroic Dragon in a quest to bring the rightful heir to the throne of Far Far Away land. Through eight action-packed levels, you'll stomp out fairy tale villains and unlock secret bonuses in Merlins forest and Castle. Keep an eye out for other character cameos too!



Capcom

STREET FIGHTER II

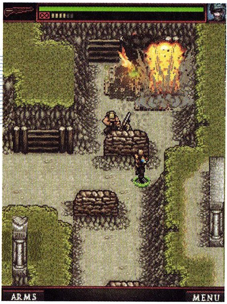
SAVE YOUR QUARTERS AND relive this definitive fighting game anytime you want! Play all eight memorable characters from the *Street Fighter* series and take comers from all over the globe to earn the title of World Champion. Unforgettable moves like Ryu's Hadoken and E. Honda's Hundred-Hand Slap are not only faithfully recreated, but also easily executed with your phone's keypad. Sonic Boom and Hurricane Kick your way to the top!



Glu

WHITEHOUSE RUMBLE

TAKE THE BOREDOM OUT of bureaucracy with this frenzied boxing game featuring a cast of parodied political heavyweights! Mr. Bush, Cheney, Giuliani and Gore step into the ring to rumble for the title of king of the [Capitol] hill! The over-the-top animations are a delight to watch, but you'll need to learn special moves and player weaknesses to survive a showdown with haymaker Hillary. And once you fill up that power meter, send opponents to the floor with a devastating knock-out blow!

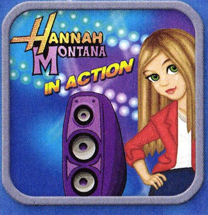


EA Mobile

MEDAL OF HONOR AIRBORNE

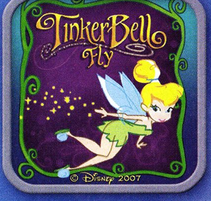
Jump into the shoes of Boyd Travers, a gutsy member of the 82nd Airborne, and liberate Europe from the clutches of fascism! The fierce combat begins at D-Day and will take you through historic World War II events like the Battle of the Bulge. Fluid infantry animations and vividly recreated battlefields create an intense simulation of warfare, while advanced tactics like utilizing cover and flanking enemies with a wide array of authentic weapons will keep you immersed in the good fight.

BRING THE MAGIC OF DISNEY TO YOUR PHONE!



Hannah Montana, the best of both worlds! Play as Miley and Hannah, behind the scenes and rocking on stage for a benefit concert.

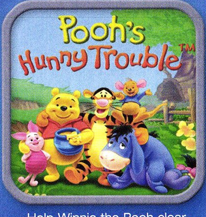
Text **HANNAH** to **386**
to purchase
Hannah Montana in Action



Fly! as Tink through the worlds of Neverland. Collect gems and explore vivid, magical places as the beloved fairy.

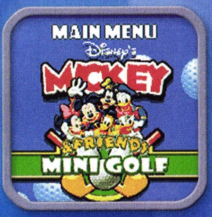
Text **TINK** to **386**
to purchase
Tinker Bell: Fly!

4000
TIME
X8



Help Winnie the Pooh clear the 100 Acre Wood! Join Pooh and his pals through the seasonal puzzles in Pooh's Hunny Trouble.

Text **HUNNY** to **386**
to purchase Winnie the Pooh's
Hunny Trouble



Mini golf with the magic of Disney! Tee off with your favorite characters on themed courses in Mickey & Friends Mini Golf.

Text **GOLF** to **386**
to purchase
Mickey & Friends Mini Golf

at&t

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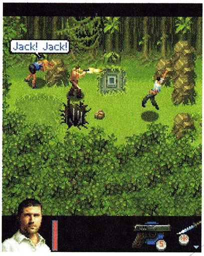
TV/Movies



Gameloft

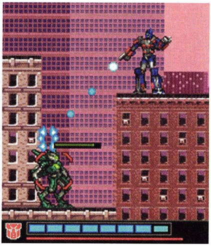
LOST

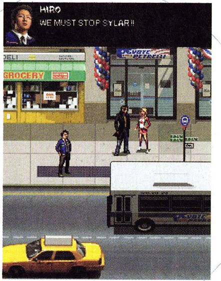
THE SURVIVORS OF OCEANIC Flight 815 are stranded on a mysterious island and need your help to survive! Guide Dr. Jack Shephard though the dangerous trap-filled jungles of the island, running away from the smoke monster and fighting the shadowy "Others." Other main characters like Kate and Locke help you protect the group in the hostile environment while you complete multiple objectives like searching for dynamite and hunting for food. Fans of the show will recognize iconic locations like the Black Rock and the Hatch.

Glu

TRANSFORMERS

AN ALIEN ENERGY SOURCE known as the Allspark is hidden somewhere on Earth, and it's up to the Autobots to recover it before the evil Decepticons to use it destroy the planet! Instantly transform from car into giant robot as Optimus Prime, the valiant leader of the Autobots. With an explosive combat system, you battle Decepticons while locating friendly Autobots scattered across multiple levels. This is action-adventure on a massive scale, with riveting robot clashes straight out of the hit summer movie.



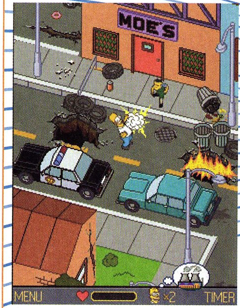


Gameloft

HEROES

ORDINARY PEOPLE WITH EXTRAORDINARY abilities band together to save the world in the smash TV hit *Heroes*. Here's your chance to fill the shoes of Hiro, Niki, or Peter in an adventure that captures Season One's most exciting moments. Each character's fantastic powers come in handy solving puzzles and mysteries through the game's 11 missions. You'll also be able to uncover secrets about the TV show found only in the mobile game!

Read our exclusive interview with the creator of the Heroes and LOST games on page 14!



EA Mobile

THE SIMPSONS: MINUTES TO MELTDOWN

America's favorite animated family needs your help to save Springfield from a nuclear meltdown! With your help, Homer fumbles through town to the power plant while avoiding hazards like buring tires and giant sinkholes. Plenty of supporting *Simpsons* cast members like Barney, Mr. Burns and Apu join the fray to help your cause, while a few mischievous characters like Krusty the Clown and Officer Lou try to prevent you from saving the day.

gameloft

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PSM 9
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PSM 8
Might and Magic II
PSM 7
CSI: Miami The Mobile Game
PSM 5
Midnight Pool 3D
PSM 6
Brain Challenge
PSM 2
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PSM 4
Guitar Legend Get on Stage
PSM 3
Asphalt 3 Street Rules 3D
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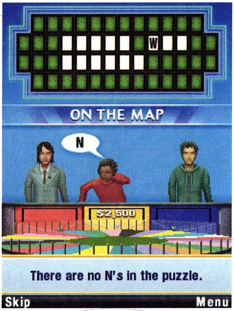
Gameshows

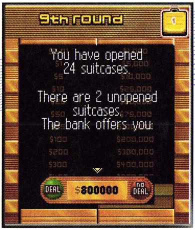


There are no N's in the puzzle.

Sony Pictures

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

America's number one game show is back on the mobile platform with a completely redesigned interface. Spin the wheel in either single player or against computer opponents while recording career statistics to commemorate your winnings. Download fresh content in the "game-of-the-day" or solve the many hidden phrases bundled with the game. *Wheel of Fortune* is a perfect diversion to sharpen your mind while having fun!

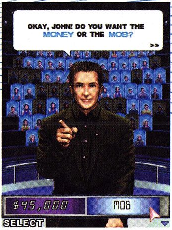


You have opened 24 suitcases.
There are 2 unopened suitcases.
The bank offers you:

Mobliss

DEAL OR NO DEAL

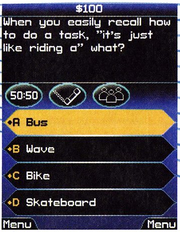
BEAT THE BANKER AND maximize your winnings on the go with the mobile edition of *Deal or No Deal*. Start off by picking a briefcase with a random monetary amount and progress through rounds by eliminating other briefcases from the pool. The banker will give you an offer to cash out or continue playing, in which case you could win the jackpot of one million dollars! Are you bold enough to resist temptation and go all the way?


OKAY, JOHN! DO YOU WANT THE MONEY OR THE MOB?

Gameloft

1 VS. 100

FACE A MOB OF 100 opponents in this mobile adaptation of the famous TV gameshow. Questions start off easy with basic trivia, but ramp up with increasing difficulty as the stakes are raised. The game comes with 700 questions contributed by actual writers of the show, and the visuals have been designed with authentic scenery and atmospheric effects to fully recreate the gameshow experience. Use your smarts to outwit the mob today!


$100
When you easily recall how to do a task, "it's just like riding a" what?

Capcom

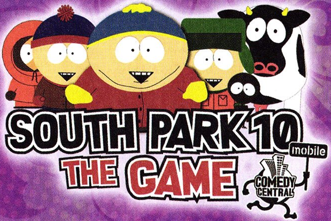
MILLIONAIRE 2007

THE HOT SEAT IS WARMED up and ready for you to try your hand at becoming a digital millionaire. The 2007 edition of *Millionaire* brings back the addictive trivia challenge made popular by the TV show. All the lifeline features—Ask the Audience, 50:50, Switch the Question, and Phone a Friend return as you move up the ladder of 15 brain-stumping questions. The library of 1,500 questions along with additional downloadable content gives you plenty of chances to show off your trivia knowledge!

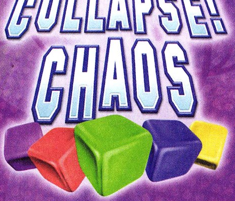
realArcade

Hit Games for Your Mobile Phone!

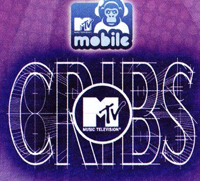
▲ Text RA31 to 386


SOUTH PARK 10
THE GAME
mobile
COMEDY CENTRAL

▲ Text RA24 to 386


COLLAPSE! CHAOS

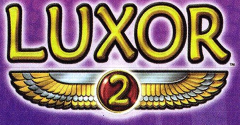
▲ Text RA30 to 386


MTV mobile
CRIBS
MTV MUSIC TELEVISION

▲ Text RA29 to 386

realArcade
EXTREME RUNNING

▲ Text RA32 to 386



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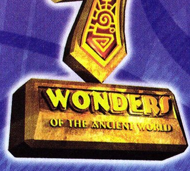
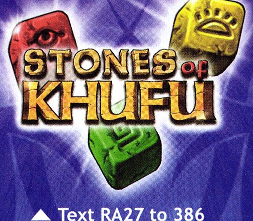
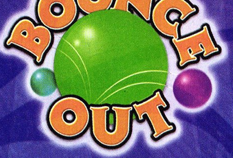

7
WONDERS
OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

▲ Text RA26 to 386


STONES of KHUFU

▲ Text RA27 to 386



▲ Text RA25 to 386

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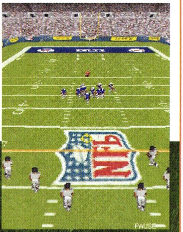
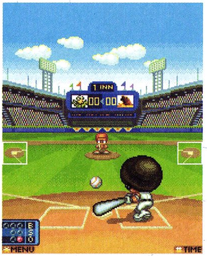
Sports

EA Mobile

MADDEN NFL 08

Hear the roar of the crowd when you lead your team to victory on the gridiron. *Madden NFL 08* lets you swiftly execute real football plays from the Madden playbook as one of NFL's 32 teams (complete with real rosters). Analyze the field and read opponent defenses with the new Field Vision feature before throwing game-winning passes for touchdowns. Al Michaels and John Madden provide color commentary to complement the motion captured animations and realistic graphics!





Gamevil

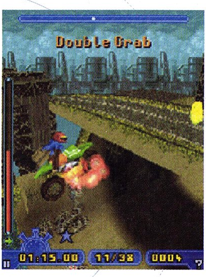
BASEBALL SUPERSTARS 2007

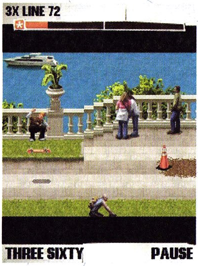
THE TINY PLAYERS IN *Baseball Superstars* may speak softly, but they carry a big bat! Customize and train a rookie baseball player to play in the big leagues with batting practice, home run derbies, and exhibition games. Then, when you're ready for the majors, take your superstar on the road in season games and manage his salary to buy new gear. The one-button controls keep cracking home runs simplistic and relaxing so you can worry about scheduling autograph sessions and dates with fans!

I-Play

FMX 3 AIR SICKNESS

GRAB SOME AMAZING AIRTIME and perform wicked tricks with your motorbike in *FMX 3 Air Sickness*. The latest iteration of the popular stunt racing series brings back its renowned rag-doll physics engine to render the most realistic bike stunts and crashes ever seen in a mobile game. Starting from humble beginnings at a local skate park, you'll ride, flip, and spin your bike in mid-air become a sensational act in Las Vegas.





EA Mobile

SKATE

EARN SERIOUS STREET CRED with slick movies like kick-flips, ollies, and 360s in *Skate*. The freestyle game mode opens up a skate park for you to try out new tricks, while the campaign mode challenges you to impress photographers to score a cover photo on *Thrasher* magazine. If you want to impress skating idols like Danny Way and Chris Cole, you'll have to look and skate the part of a true professional.

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START
SELECT
OK
A
B
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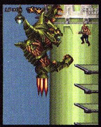

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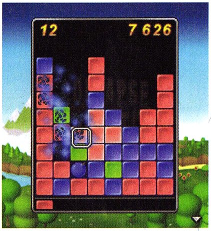
KONAMI

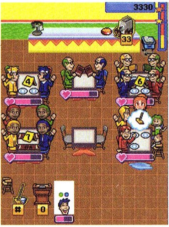
Puzzles



RealArcade

COLLAPSE! CHAOS

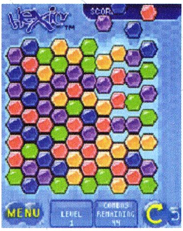
TEST YOUR BLOCK-BUSTING skills in *Collapse! Chaos*, a mobile adaptation of the award-winning casual game *Super Collapse! 3*. Quest through 40 fun-filled levels on the four lands of the Collapse world to collect gold and stars. A quick play arena is also included with six additional game modes for added excitement. Power-ups, trophies, and casino mini-games help you on your way to becoming a Quest Master!



Glu

DINER DASH 2

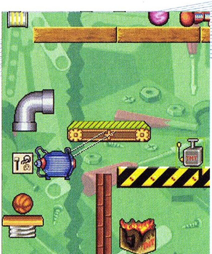
WHO KNEW WAITING TABLES could actually be so addictively enjoyable? Play as Flo as she returns for a second helping of hosting restaurants and serving customers. The happier you keep the customer, the higher your score (and the higher your tip!). To ensure that they have a delightful experience, it's your job to seat and serve them quickly. But once the restaurant becomes packed with different types of patrons, each with different attributes and needs, keeping track of all your tasks becomes a handful. The frenzy is the fun!



I-Play

HEXIC

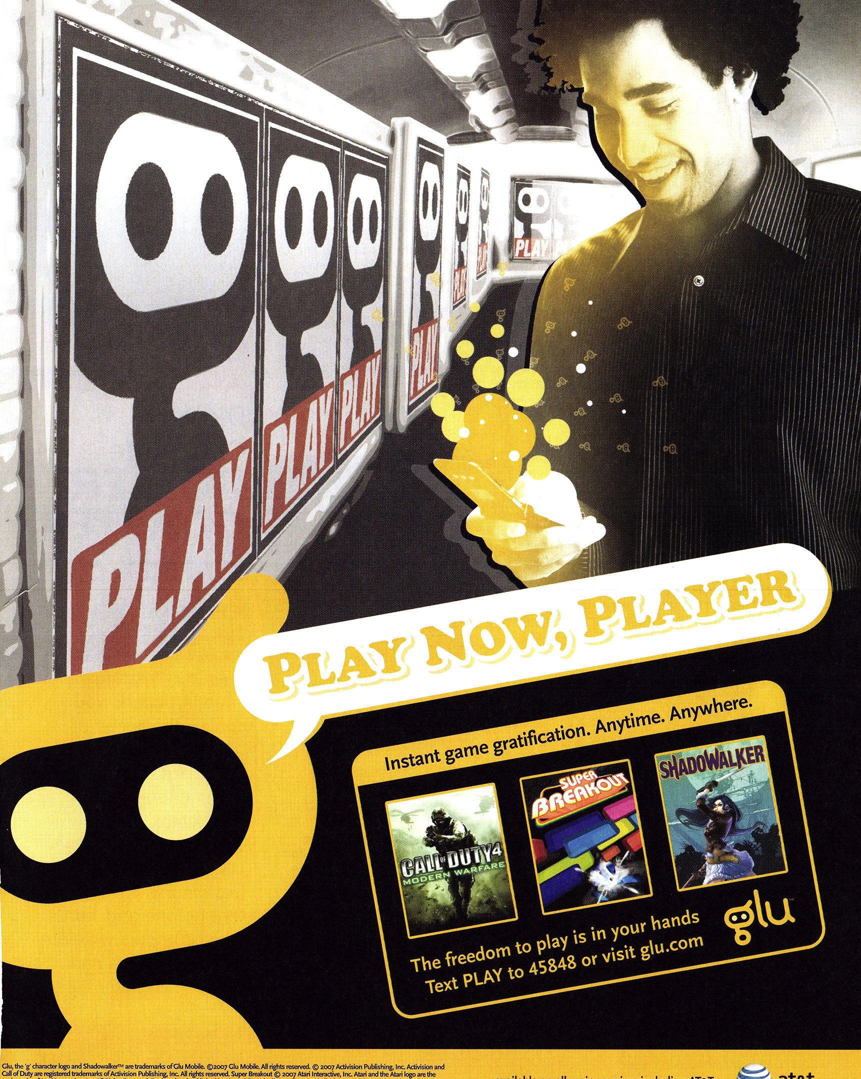
ALEXEI PAJITNOV, THE DESIGNER of *Tetris*, returns to the puzzle world with a new noggin twister. In *Hexic*, your goal is to clear the screen of hexagonal pieces by rotating them to match adjacent like-colored tiles. Clusters of tiles of the same color vanish to give you points, but you can boost your score by hitting bonus tile pieces and arranging a string of matches. You'll catch on quick but it'll take practice to master the three game modes!



Vivendi

INCREDIBLE MACHINE

As a genius inventor, you're charged with solving a slew of brain-teasing puzzles using a combination of wacky tools like accelerator tubes, mirrors, and laser detectors. Each puzzle's goal is different from the last—from moving basketballs to specific locations to turning on a toaster. Sounds easy, but you'll need to stretch your noodle to the limit to solve all 80 distinct puzzles using over 60 different objects.



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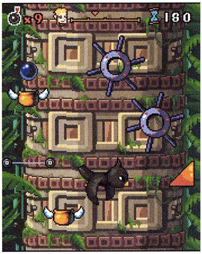
available on all major carriers including AT&T.

at&t

One-Click Fun



Gamevil

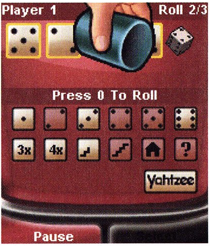
SUPER BOOM BOOM

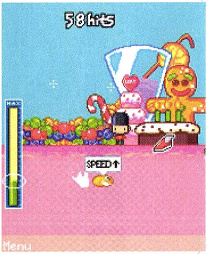
AHOY, MATEY! AS A pirate living the good life on the high seas, you're on the hunt for precious treasure. But in order to reach your bounty, you'll have to toss live bombs across the screen, avoiding moving baskets to knock out a walled defense. The elegant gameplay design lets you play with a single button, but you'll be challenged by levels filled with obstacles like fire and flying birds. Delay too long before firing and the bomb will explode! Just keep your eyes on the loot!

EA Mobile

YAHTZEE DELUXE

ALL THE EXCITEMENT OF classic *YAHTZEE* gameplay is compacted into the palm of you hand, with simplified one-button controls and a great boardgame-inspired visuals. Three different modes of play—classic, rainbow, and duplicate, add welcome variety to the game. Up to four friends can take turns to play together, though the built-in computer player is no pushover!

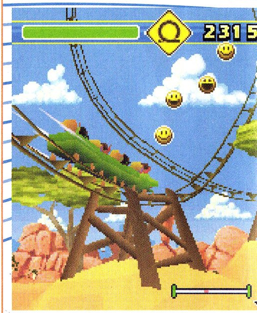




I-play

SKIPPING STONE

RELIVE YOUR CHILDHOOD PASTIME of skipping stones across ponds with this delightfully simple one-button game. Go for distance or a big splash in the game's two modes. Perfecting a skip is easy, just hold the button down for a strong initial throw and then tap the key to synchronize with the skipping stone. Earn power-ups and bonuses for perfect timing and try to avoid hazards like tornadoes that'll ruin your toss! With a little practice, you'll be skipping stones for miles!



Digital Chocolate

ROLLER COASTER RUSH 3D

Give thrill-seekers the ride of their lives as a roller coaster brake operator. Passengers strap in tight as you control the speed of their cars – ramp up the speed as they zoom through loops and over jumps, but slow them down before the cars fly off the rails (parachutes ensure that no one gets hurt)! Satisfied riders will earn you extra points and longer passenger cars.

at&t

GAMES ON THE MOVE

WHEEL OF FORTUNE
JEOPARDY!
PLAY GAME
SETTINGS
HELP
ABOUT
EXIT
Yes
No
GOD OF WAR
BETRAYAL
Ivan Moscovich's
Brain Waves
Play
Settings
SELECT
EXIT
Q*Bert

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WHEEL OF FORTUNE

Experience all the fast-paced fun of the TV game show in this new and improved mobile version of the puzzling-solving classic!

JEOPARDY!

Put your knowledge to the test with the latest version of the mobile game featuring thousands of challenging clues.

SPIDER-MAN™

Spider-Man is in for the fight of his life against a lethal mix of villains.

GOD OF WAR

Kratos, accused of betraying the Gods, wages a bloody campaign to win back their favor.

BRAIN WAVES

Two mind bending games for the price of one from legendary puzzle creator Ivan Moscovich.

Q*BERT

Q*Bert, Slick, Sam and Coily are back and better than ever in this 80's arcade classic!

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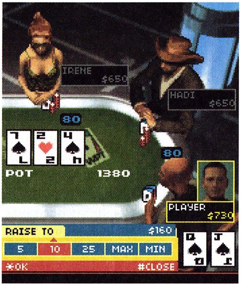
SONY PICTURES TELEVISION

MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT

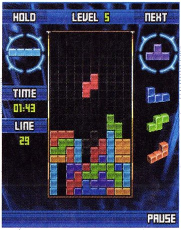
Multiplayer



Hands-on

WPT TEXAS HOLD 'EM 2

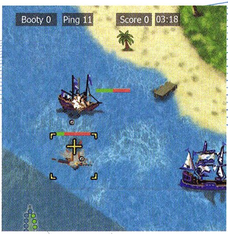
Win big without putting it all on the line! *WPT Texas Hold 'Em 2* for mobile caters to poker players of all experience levels. Whether you're just learning or a seasoned professional, you'll enjoy the cool features like avatar customization, live tournaments, and real-time chat with other players. True web-to-wireless functionality means that you share one account between your home computer and mobile phone. Daily multiplayer events will keep you hooked!



EA Mobile

TETRIS

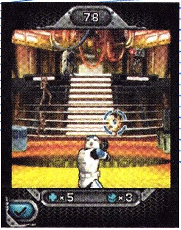
IT'S ONE OF THE most popular games of all time, now better with full-featured multiplayer support! Battle a friend over the AT&T network in a race to clear the most lines, and launch block attacks to hinder their progress. Variations include Ultra mode, where you have to score the most points in two minutes, and Forty Line, where the winner is the quickest to clear forty lines. The game also automatically matches you with opponents of similar skill level so you'll never have to play alone!



Disney

DISNEY'S PIRATES MULTIPLAYER

COMMAND A SHIP AS a pirate captain and sail the Spanish Main in search of adventure and riches. Up to 16 aspiring buccaneers set sail on the high seas together, plundering towns and fighting rival pirates in wood-splintering sea battles. Groups of players can band together to form guilds of over a hundred players, all competing for the highest "infamy score" among tens of thousands of other pirates.



THQ

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT MOBILE

CHOOSE TO SIDE WITH the evil Galactic Empire or the plucky Rebels for control of a persistent online galaxy in this action-packed shooter. You'll battle across fifteen planets from the *Star Wars* universe to wrest control of important bases and outposts. Each skirmish pits you against an onslaught of enemies, who you blast away for points. The score is added up after the shootout, and tallied by a master server along with other players' performances to decide which team takes the territory. We don't have to say it, but may the Force be with you!

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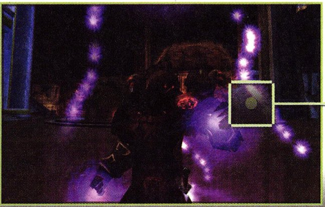
DEMOS

MODS

PATCHES



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. GAME LINKS . EVOLVED

PlayStation Network

Multiplayer Strategies | Letters | Game Reviews | PlayStation Store

Whether on foot, in the air, or behind the controls of a tank, you should always play to each situation's strengths.

DEVELOPER STRATEGY

WARHAWK TOP TEN TIPS

Rob shares his best 10 *Warhawk* tips. Courtesy of developer Incognito, who he tapped for help to get ahead when his own skills sucked!

Reader tips

We asked, you answered. We laughed... at some of them.

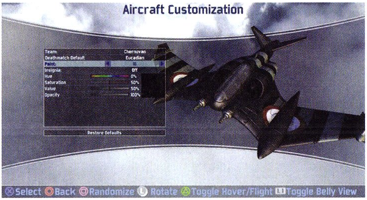
- **Jump Shot**
  Aim at enemies' necks and fire while jumping — you'll get a headshot and they'll only hit your chest. *Res, PTOM Blog*
- **Silent But Violent**
  Use the knife to make yourself invisible on the map. This comes in handy against Warhawks. They may think you were killed by a missile that you actually survived. You can gather weapons unnoticed and come out of the woodwork later with rocket launchers and other useful items. *Astral_Dragon_2099, PTOM Blog*
- **Sage Advice**
  Practice! Don't give up! *JuJuRMJ, PTOM Blog*

So you're dying, exploding, wandering aimlessly, and all-too-infrequently scoring your own kills and point-scoring in random *Warhawk* matches online. You're getting sorta frustrated. But you're also the Editor-in-Chief of PlayStation: The Official Magazine. So what do you do? You, ahem, strategically cheat. You go straight to the expert source for help — some may call it cheating; using what you have is how I might term it. But then the tips are so effective, dragged by the moral imperative to do the right thing, I share…

ROB SMITH

① ALWAYS PREP YOUR CHAFF

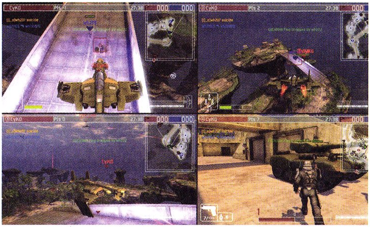
Chaff is a great way to scrub all missiles that are currently locked-on... It's like a get out of jail free card. If you aren't quick with your weapon cross, though, you might not be able to launch the counter-measures in time. A really good habit to get into is to have your Chaff selected in the weapon cross if you're not currently engaging a target. This way, you can deploy it very quickly if you get into trouble. Once you get a target lined-up and you begin to engage, then use the weapon cross to switch weapon systems until you dispatch your opponent. After the target's been neutralized, go back to chaff.



Aircraft Customization

Team: Chernovan
Deathmatch Default Eucadian
Paint: 18
Insignia: Off
Hue 0%
Saturation 50%
Value 50%
Opacity 100%

It's not just eye-candy: Customizing the look of your Warhawk makes it easier for your teammates to spot in the heat of combat.



Warhawk pilots can get an edge on enemies by flying to the top of the map's altitude cap and attacking while in a dive. Ground troops should crouch to fire whenever possible because it greatly improves their accuracy.

② **ALTITUDE** Many of the atmospheres in the levels let you climb to great heights, yet many new players still hug the ground. Try climbing to MAX altitude and then attacking your targets more vertically instead of horizontally. This is especially useful when you're flying the Warhawk using Pro-Mode controls.

③ **MINE TURRETS** Most turrets have a common approach, up the ladder into the back, or just above the bunker, whatever. Take some time to place a mine on the side of a turret that a player won't see when they mount the turret. It's a great way to get easy kills, and as many players already know, turrets are deadly, so your teammates will be thankful!

④ **DON'T CAMP IN TURRETS** When a turret is active, it will be displayed on everyone's radar. So while the turrets are incredibly powerful, they also tend to draw a ton of fire. Once you find a turret that you want to use, find your targets, attack them, and then once they are destroyed, hop out of the turret. It will then power-down and won't show-up as active on everyone's radar. This will limit the amount of time you draw attention to yourself.

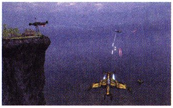
⑤ **COMMUNICATE** We can't stress this enough. *Warhawk* is very, very fast-paced and just a smidgen of team communication can make the difference between victory and defeat. It doesn't even have to be complicated strategies either. Simply call out if you're on offense or defense. This way your team knows if you're protecting the base, the flag… whatever. We have seen soooo many games turn around by just this basic level of communication.

⑥ **MINE THE CLOUDS** Players love flying through the clouds; every level you can watch the skies and see which clouds get the most traffic. Fly into the cloud and then drop a mine at its center. This will hide the mine from your opponents and it's a fun way to get a kill!

⑦ **MINE THE TOPS OF THE TERRITORY FLAGS** At the center of all the bases in *Warhawk*, you'll find a large cement and metal base with a huge flagpole. Pilots often fly dangerously close to these flag poles, so they're a great location for placing mines. Get near the pole and jump as high as you can while aiming up. At the apex of your jump, chuck a prox-mine on the pole, as high up as you can get it. You'll be surprised how many kills you can get on aircraft with this one simple tactic.

⑧ **HEADSHOTS MATTER** While the targeting and aiming system for character mode is very easy, truly skilled players learn to pull the targeting reticule up towards a character's upper body and head. Wounds sustained to the head cause double damage and often determine who is killed and who lives to fight another day. Also, players need to know that the accuracy of their rifle and pistol fire is *greatly* increased when crouching.

Don't underestimate the importance of chaff while flying your Warhawk. Deploy it when you're locked onto.



Air mines are easy to spot out in the open like this, but plant them in the clouds and you'll surprise foes.

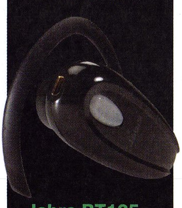
Teamwork is key to owning your opposition. Even a simple heads-up on what you're doing helps.

⑨ **SCRUBBING MISSILES** A quick and simple aerobatic maneuver is the four-step-juke and it's especially effective when using Pro-Mode. When you see your missile warning indicator start flashing, pitch down, then left, pitch up, then right. This simple combination of pitching and banking yields a good amount of "agility" in the aerobatics code and will almost certainly scrub some of the incoming missiles.

⑩ **MEDALS AND AWARDS** Many players often stumble on awards and medals during gameplay, but if you are really intent on ranking up, focus on your prerequisites. Before you jump online and play, take a quick glance at your stats and awards. See which ones you're close to, which ones are needed for the next rank. This will help you not only determine what game to connect to, but also focus your gameplay and maximize your award earning potential. △○✕□

BEST BLUETOOTH BETS

You've no doubt noticed how crucial communicating with your teammates is in *Warhawk*, but what if you downloaded the game from the PlayStation Store and thus didn't get the retail version's bundled Bluetooth headset? Here are two recommended options available for purchase online and at most electronics retailers.



Jabra BT125

PRICE: $44.99

This is the same headset included with the boxed version of *Warhawk*. It's surprisingly comfortable and offers impressive audio quality for the price.

Plantronics Voyager 510

PRICE: $99.99

The headset has earned rave reviews from owners for its excellent noise canceling, six hour talk time, and option of three different earpieces for custom comfort.

Letters

Feedback, Insight, Critical Judgment, and some crazy #%@*!

GOT GAME?

When I first heard people giving the PS3 the "No Games" label, I was saddened. To this very day, I still see people complain that the PSP has no games. When did these people last check? The PSP has games from every genre, for every age group, and people still give it that label. What, if any, chance does the PS3 have of breaking the bonds of the "No Games" label?

Jon Henagan, Pineville, LA

Randy: PSP definitely had a lull shortly after launch, but as we've seen, great games are headed to the system in droves, and sales of the PSP have increased. In fact, many of the top-rated games for the PlayStation family are currently PSP-only. PS3 is affected by the lengthening of development cycles due to the sheer amount of work needed to create a truly next-generation game. That means better art, sound, programming... the works. Remember, the true system sellers — GTA IV and *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots* — are nearly here. Those and many other exclusives are going to turn a lot of heads (and change a lot of people's perceptions) in early '08.

BLU-RAY WILL WIN

Do not worry about Paramount's treachery, my dear staffers. Blu-ray is alive and well. The switch to HD DVD is not permanent. It was a decision made as a business transaction between Paramount and Toshiba. The deal includes an 18-month window of exclusivity for HD DVD for a payment of $150 million. This does not include movies Paramount does not own all the rights to, including practically anything by Lucas or Spielberg, like the recent blockbuster *Transformers* and Indiana Jones. So that makes two Studios HD DVD exclusive as opposed to the seven Blu-ray exclusive. If New Line (which has *Lord of the Rings*) announces intent to support Blu-ray exclusively, then we have a monopoly on all the major franchises and the war is practically won. So unless Paramount comes out with multiple, record-breaking mega-hits within the next 18 months, there is really nothing to worry about.

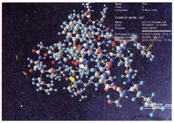
Geoff Scharnow, Winter Park, FL

Randy: Everyone's biggest question — "What does this mean for Indy?" — was answered almost immediately. I'm just glad that next-generation DVDs are here, and really hope that the competition results in the studios going all-out to make their HD releases as good-looking and feature-packed as possible. Still, HD DVD is hanging in, but Blu-ray discs are continuing to outsell it by a wide margin.

BRANCHING OUT

I'm a little confused... is the *Final Fantasy* movie *Advent Children* supposed to be as kick ass as the game or Is it just supposed to be a kick ass CG movie? Why not use it as a platform for other projects? Seriously, did anybody not get chills when Behemoth came roaring out of the sky? See it for what it is, a branch (a very

> "What, if any, chance does the PS3 have of breaking the bonds of the 'No Games' label?" *–Jon Henagan*



FOLDING @ HOME

Our Folding@Home team — 57353 — is now ranked 81st (of 83,764 teams at press time) in the world, with a total work unit count of 76,196! Rob's the most diligent with 304 work units, and Randy's close behind with 302. Impressive, yes, but we can always use the help from readers like you. So join the fight. All of us with PS3s should do our part in the fight against cancer!

LETTER OF THE MONTH

IT'S OFFICIALLY OFFICIAL

Hey, we need more info on the change to being "official." No departures or anything like that? I've been a subscriber for a very long time and PSM always ruled on everything PlayStation. The magazine had its own style and exclusive stuff that I appreciated. I will miss PSM, but will welcome this new iteration of an already proven gaming magazine!

JuJuRMJ, The Internet

Rob: Take PSM, add a complete redesign and refresh of what we've done in the past, stir in "official" access that ensures we'll get you the inside scoop, simmer for a month or two, and voila! PlayStation: The Official Magazine is born. Absolutely nothing is lost in this change, and so much is gained. Expect us to keep improving the content and style over the coming months. And tell us what you think of this special premiere issue.

PlayStation 3 ■ PlayStation Portable ■ PlayStation Network ■ PlayStation 2
PlayStation
The Official Magazine
PREMIERE ISSUE
EXCLUSIVE
Sony President Kaz Hirai on the FUTURE OF PLAYSTATION
REVIEWED
CALL OF DUTY 4
THE SIMPSONS GAME
TOP 10 WARHAWK TACTICS
SONY'S R+D GURU REVEALS HIS VISION FOR THE PLAYSTATION EYE
WORLD EXCLUSIVE
GRAN TURISMO 5
The inside story of the spectacular racing sim that will rock your socks
Future

Some people adored *Advent Children,* while others responded to it with a resounding "Meh."

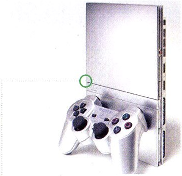
cool branch) on the *FFVII* tree.
Tommy Lovingood, The Internet

Teresa: In case you've missed it, Tommy, *FFVII* is being used as a platform for other projects! The powers that be call it "*Compilation of Final Fantasy VII*" and it'll include the original game, *Advent Children, Dirge of Cerberus, Before Crisis,* and *Crisis Core* (for PSP). One more branch that we'd personally like to see, though, is a *FFVII* remake on the PS3 with a full graphical overhaul, extra cutscenes, tweaked gameplay, and maybe a few more Easter eggs thrown in.

THE BEST IS YET TO COME

As a long time fan and supporter of the Sony PlayStation, I am in conflict about which system (PS3 or 360) to buy. So far, ports to PS3, such as *Madden '08* and *F.E.A.R.* seem to have a slower frame rate and colors that are not as vibrant. Will all the big software companies build games on both consoles or just continue to provide sub-par ports to PS3?
Fred Georgi, The Internet

Randy: It's not cheap to make games. It's even more expensive to make truly next-gen ones the likes of *Ratchet & Clank Future* or *Heavenly Sword.* We're seeing a fairly large number of publishers creating games on 360 first — since in terms of hardware features it's a baseline — then bring them over to PS3 while devoting some (but not enough, in many cases) effort to taking advantage of the PS3's capabilities. We're starting to see a trend, though, of specific developers choosing to build their games on PS3 first (case in point, Free Radical's *Haze*) so they can master the hardware. It's likely that cross-platform games will be very similar, but PS3 exclusives will really showcase the system's awesome power.



DON'T FORGET US!

Lately I have felt a little neglected. I can't afford a PS3, so I still have my PS2 . I know there are fewer PS2 games, but you should at least have a small section dedicated to PS2 games. With games like *Manhunt 2* coming out, you could take a little more time to make ALL your readers happy.
Jeff Yuettner, Coventry, RI

Rob: We go where the games are, and that's mostly PS3 right now. Still, we've continued to cover the biggest PS2 games (like *Manhunt 2* as you mentioned), and will do so with the games you want to know about. Just check out this issue — we have previews and reviews of several PS2 games.

CONSOLE COINCIDENCE

The same day I read Adam Warren's cartoon "Why Sony will win the console war" comic, my PS2 died. Does this seem strange to anyone else?
Kenneth Anderton, Richmond, VA

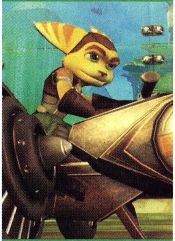
Bill: While Mr. Warren is a fine cartoonist, he doesn't have any kind of precognitive powers. It's like that time he told me the Raiders would win the Super Bowl back in 2002... and in 2003... and in 2004... well, you get the idea.

WAR IS HELGHAST

You said that *Killzone 2* takes place on Helgan, but wouldn't all the ISA soldiers turn into Helghast themselves? *Clint, Centerville, MN*

Randy: It's taken many years for the environment on Helgan to turn its populace into the Helghast. ISA forces will have to deal with the environment, but won't be immediately mutated.

YOUR TAKE



Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction

"The action was insane! It felt like I was playing a movie."
Andy Stanco, Palm Springs, CA

"I was hoping for more innovation since it's a PS3 game. It's the same game I played on PS2 only with prettier graphics."
Jon Pollis, Reno, NV

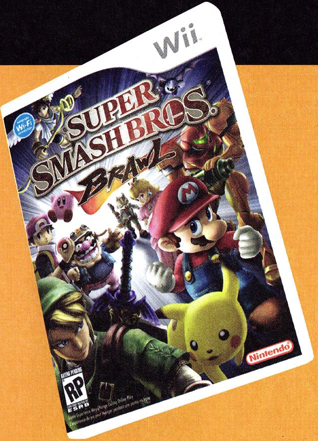
"Why aren't more companies making PS3 games that look this good? It blows away everything else I've played." *Denton Drake, Queens, NY*

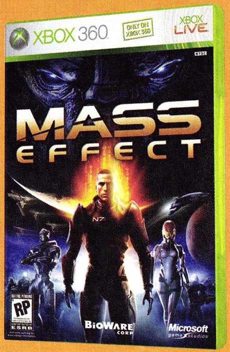
"I really think they should have taken a new direction like Naughty Dog did with *Uncharted.* That, or made *Resistance 2.*" *Leon Rodriguez, Redmond, WA*

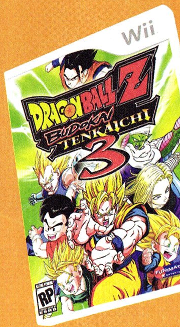
"So... when will we get *Ratchet & Clank: The Movie*?" *Louis Rivera, Salida, CA*

Visit psmonline.com to send us Your Take on next issue's topic.

contact Send us your thoughts and comments to letters@psmonline.com. We're eager to hear what you think about the new magazine, clean look, and refreshed scoring system.


Wii
Super Smash Bros. Brawl
Nintendo


XBOX 360
XBOX LIVE
Mass Effect
BioWare
Microsoft game studios


Wii
Dragon Ball Z Budokai Tenkaichi 3
Atari

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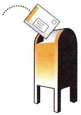

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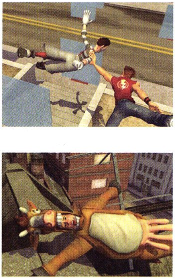
PlayStation Network Games

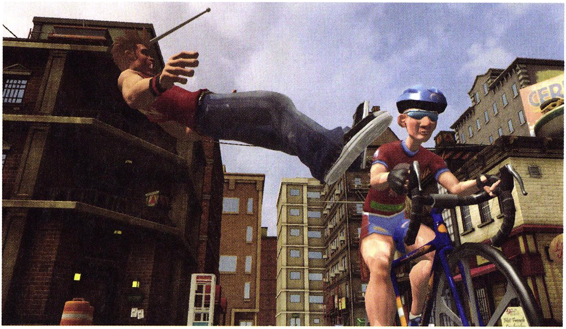
Downloadable games for the price of a mocha. We say Yea or Nay.

+ **YEA** You'll get full value for your money.

- **NAY** No legs, no fun, no value.



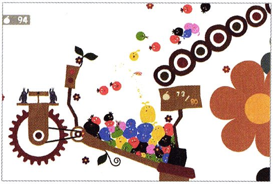
Mime tossing (top) is insanely fun. The better you do in the game, the more costumes you unlock (bottom).



Pain

PRICE: $9.99 **DEVELOPER:** Idol Minds

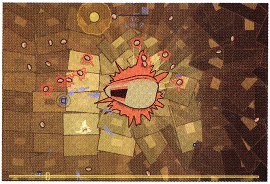
+ *Pain* is akin to taking all of the crazy stunts you'd attempt in *Grand Theft Auto* and making a full game out of them. Realistic physics are put to great use as you fling a body across a peril-laden cityscape; the Mime Toss and Spank the Monkey mini-games are loads of fun. Plus, the leader board feature is ideal for focusing your efforts to improve your online ranking. RN



LocoRoco Cocoreccho

PRICE: $6.99 **DEVELOPER:** Sony Computer Entertainment

+ While it plays quite differently than the PSP favorite, this download retains a fresh feel and a sense of absolute innocent bliss. It can be played through quite quickly, but there are enough hidden areas and LocoRocos in the unified game world to keep you trying for 100% completion for weeks. RN



Everyday Shooter

PRICE: $9.99 **DEVELOPER:** Queasy Games

+ Some might call *Everyday Shooter* yet another *Robotron* knockoff, but we call it absolutely brilliant. Eight beautiful levels are set to a fantastic soundtrack and with a fistful of artistic unlockables, this game has us completely enamored. Oh, yeah, and as an inspiration, this gem was the brainchild of a single ambitious individual. TD

Also Out Now

Super Stardust HD

PRICE: $7.99

DEVELOPER: Housemarque

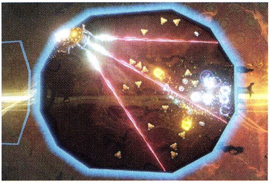
+ Up until the relatively recent release of Jonathan Mak's sterling *Everyday Shooter*, this was easily our favorite downloadable PS3 action title. Defending a planet from deadly incoming asteroids with sights, sounds, and gameplay that are out of this world.

Calling All Cars

PRICE: $9.99

DEVELOPER: Sony Santa Monica

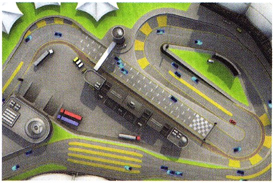
+ From *God of War* creator David Jaffe, this throwback to classic arcade experiences is a one to four player mad dash to capture criminals and return them to the pokey before someone takes you down. An excellent party game.



Blast Factor Advanced Research

PRICE: $4.99 **DEVELOPER:** Bluepoint Games

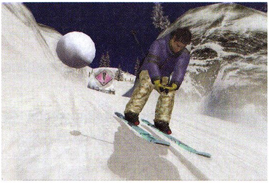
+ The original *Blast Factor* had you decontaminating cells *Robotron*-style. This add-on, *Advanced Research*, introduces seven new levels with seven new bosses and eleven new enemies. The music, art, and sound effects have been enhanced, but the challenging, fun gameplay remains intact. TD



PixelJunk Racers

PRICE: $6.99 **DEVELOPER:** Q-Games

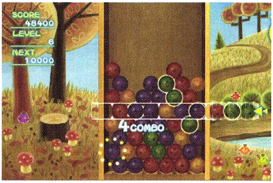
− Running at 1080p, this slot car racer supports up to seven simultaneous players and features a multitude of varied skill challenges, but the extremely tiny scale of the cars themselves often makes keeping an eye on yours difficult. It's briefly fun and challenging, but ultimately a snoozer. RN



Go! Sports Ski

PRICE: $2.99 **DEVELOPER:** Yuke's

− It's hard to imagine why this absolutely dreadful game — comprised of only two runs — ever made its way to PlayStation Network. The forced SIXAXIS tilt controls are not engaging in the least, it looks like a sub-par PS2 title, and there's absolutely no fun to be found. PS3 games - even downloadables - don't get any worse. RN



Piyotama

PRICE: $2.99 **DEVELOPER:** Sony Japan Studio

− The best puzzle games are addictive, challenging, and logical. Unfortunately, *Piyotama* is none of the above. You get a mental jolt when the pieces slide into place because you can breeze through the game by guesswork, which means you have no real reason to develop skill in this dull game. TD

Game Night

Call of Duty 4 showdown!

11.14.07 6pm PST

See if you have what it takes to cap the editors of PlayStation: The Official Magazine! We'll be online accepting all challengers. Go online and look for us — our names are RobPTOM, BillPTOM, KenPTOM, RandyPTOM, TeresaPTOM, and TomPTOM. The top reader will get their name and score printed in the next issue!

PLAYSTATION STORE

If you're looking for décor to spruce up your PS3 a bit, mosey on over to the PlayStation Store.

WALLPAPERS

Wallpapers of *Ratchet & Clank*, *The Simpsons Game*, *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune*, and more are available this month for free download in Standard Definition, High Definition, and 1080 HD.

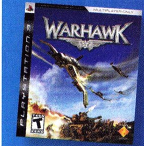
MOVIES

While you're there, grab the two complimentary *Uncharted* Behind-the-Scenes movies to get an inside look at the game's characters, motion capture system, music, and more.

DEMOS

- **Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction**
- **Clive Barker's Jericho**
- **NHL 2K8**
- **Conan**
- **The Simpsons Game**

If you're looking to purchase a game, *Warhawk* is still available for $39.99.



Or return to the classics with games like *Tekken 2* ($5.99) and *Syphon Filter* ($5.99), which you can play on both your PS3 and your PSP.

ADD-ONS

The Castro Capitano for *MotorStorm* ($0.99) grants you one new vehicle.

The Speed Master pack for *Ninja Gaiden* ($2.99) includes five new survival modes, which you can use to up your score in the World Ranking System.

PlayStation POV

Welcome to The Official Magazine

On behalf of all of us at Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA), I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your support of the PlayStation® family of products and to welcome you inside our world. PlayStation: The Official Magazine is an all-new publication created with one goal in mind: to give you an insider's view that you won't find anywhere else. In this day and age, where news and information are available as it happens, from any number of sources, we are looking to give you a fresh perspective — one that is as deep and insightful as it is refreshing and exciting — in short, a good read that you won't put down. Every month, as a result of the magazine's exclusive relationship with SCEA, you will find features and articles that you simply can't get anywhere else, brought to you by the many talented people that are part of the PlayStation world.

PREMIERE ISSUE
PlayStation
The Official Magazine
WORLD EXCLUSIVE
GRAN TURISMO 5
PS3's full power revealed in the best-looking game ever
TOP 10 WARHAWK TACTICS
PLAYSTATION EYE SECRET FEATURES THAT WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU PLAY
EXCLUSIVE
FUTURE OF PLAYSTATION
REVIEWED
CALL OF DUTY 4
MANHUNT 2

In this inaugural issue, our focus is on what gamers can expect this holiday season. With three PlayStation platforms we have something for everyone. If you're interested in high-definition gaming and entertainment, we recently announced new hardware models and pricing and more than 65 software titles and 450 Blu-ray titles will be available to PLAYSTATION®3 (PS3™) users this holiday. If it's mobile gaming you're interested in, we just launched a sleeker, redesigned version of our PSP® (PlayStation®Portable) as well as three new, limited-edition entertainment packs and colors. Seven years after its release, our commitment to PlayStation®2 remains strong. This holiday we will release a wide variety of software titles for both hardcore and casual gamers as well as a limited-edition ceramic white model that comes bundled with SingStar Pop.

So, whether you've been with us since the early days of the original PlayStation or are just jumping on as we enter the high-definition age, we think PlayStation: The Official Magazine will offer something for everyone and hope that our magazine becomes your magazine, and an indispensable part of your PlayStation experience.

Jack Tretton
President and CEO of SCEA

Previews
Soul Calibur IV
The legendary sword-fighting series hits PS3 – and takes the battle online
Slashing opponents to ribbons will feel much more satisfying when they're sent flying and smash through a stone column.

GRAN TURISMO 5
THE JUGGERNAUT ROLLS
THE BILLION-DOLLAR FRANCHISE
YOUR EYES ARE WORKING FINE — IT REALLY DOES LOOK THAT SPECTACULAR.

PlayStation Network
WARHAWK TOP TEN TIPS
Reader tips
BEST BLUETOOTH BETS

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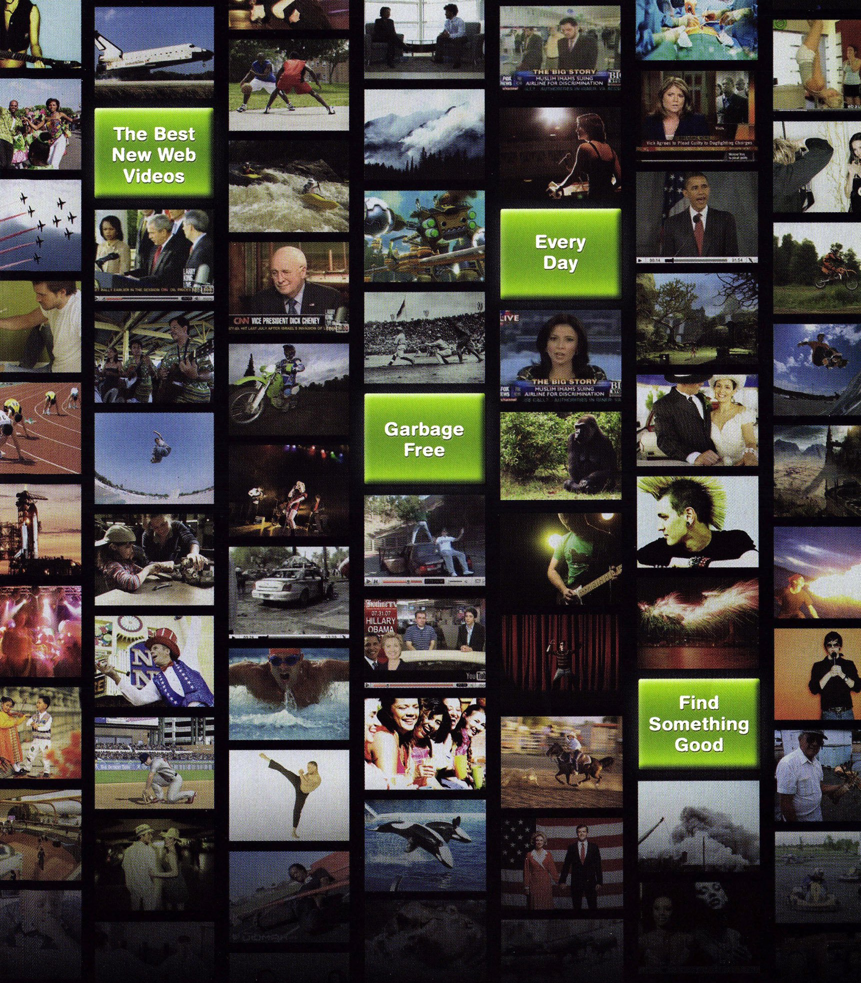
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